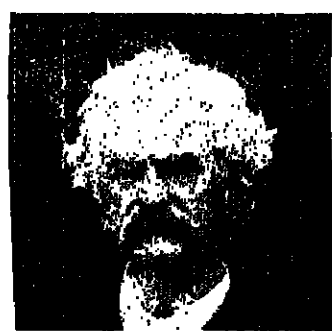


George Orwell once described POLITICAL JOKES as "tiny revolutions", under some political systems humour may be the sole surviving expression of opposition. Paul Flather meets two political scientists who have compiled a volume of political jokes aptly entitled *No Laughing Matter* (page 11)

You didn't have to be a weatherman in the 1970s to recognize that the political wind had turned mild and blew from the right and centre. But is STUDENT ACTIVISM undergoing a revival, spurred by issues such as apartheid? Ian Coxon describes British student pressure on South African contacts (page 12) while Philip Altbach reports from the USA (page 14)

Next week sees the first meeting of the proposed COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION. William Norris looks at the work of an American forerunner (page 13)

Who now is a gentleman? The language of CLASS, P. N. Furbank argues, is a minefield of value judgements. But does it any longer reflect reality? And have the novelists beaten the sociologists to the tape? (page 15)



Mark Twain
American literature, notoriously, lacks a Great Tradition; or, at least, it is always in the process of reinventing its traditions. Tony Tanner reviews the first seven volumes of the Cambridge LIBRARY OF AMERICA, a series designed to become the "American Pelade" (page 17)

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The wasting of excellence

Quick readers of careless newspaper headlines may have been given the impression that universities came rather well out of last week's statement on the Government's future public expenditure plans. It seemed to promise a little new money by devoting routes local authority expenditure on schools in contrast was criticized again for outstripping the Government's restrictive targets. So for higher education the story seemed to be it could have been much worse.

In fact nothing could have been more misleading than those faintly hopeful headlines. It hardly could be worse. Far from being preferred to schools, higher education, and in particular the universities, is again to suffer a larger than average cut measured in any sensible terms. At a time of high student demand and still rising student numbers expenditure on universities and polytechnics is to be progressively (maybe regressively) reduced. The appeal by the University Grants Committee for level funding has been brushed aside. The extra money for equipment and the ill-judged "switch" is pitiful, remarkably little of it is even new money if the small print is read carefully. The amount of the advanced further education pool could hardly be more inadequate - unless it were the university recurrent grant. The hyped additions to the science budget only seem generous because expectations had fallen so low. American or French scientists would regard our budget as unacceptable parsimony.

Far from being a silver lining, or light at the end of the tunnel, or whatever other PR cliché we will be asked to swallow, last week's public expenditure statement confirmed this Government's hostile indifference to higher education so grossly displayed six months ago in the Green Paper. Universities now face a period of austerity at least as deep as that they experienced between 1979 and 1983 - and from a fragile and eroded base. The polytechnics and colleges have helped to accommodate the peak of student demand by opening their doors, and now are to be rewarded by being held to the lower staffing and resourcing standards that flowed from their willingness to maintain standards of access. The result? Not only are they to be frozen into a permanent inferiority to the universities, they are to be the dubious privilege of leading the system down to new levels of impoverishment.

These facts should be faced squarely and not fudged. The time for politeness is over. Of course there have been shortcomings on the side of higher education - the damning failure by university leaders to generate an alternative vision, the appeasement by the UGC of an university forces it was, and its duty to oppose, the obsessive envy of some polytechnic and college leaders which has played into the hands of those who have sought successfully to divide and so to rule higher education.

But the bulk of the blame for the impoverishment of higher education must rest with the Department of Education and Science. There can be no more excuses. Of course civil servants there have found it extraordinarily difficult to persuade their ministers of the case for extra resources, and these ministers, not all of whom can be accused of positive ill-will towards higher education, have found it extraordinarily difficult in turn to persuade the central departments of state and the Cabinet of the need to fund universities and polytechnics adequately. But it is both feeble and dishonest to argue, as the DES now suggests, that these efforts would have been more successful if only higher education itself had been able to present a more persuasive case. This excuse does not absolve the DES of its responsibility to fight for higher education if ministers and civil servants believed it had a strong case. But maybe they did not? In any case the DES has failed; the resources to sustain higher education have not been found.

The gap between what universities need and what the present Government is prepared to provide is now virtually unbridgeable. It is not hundreds of thousands and millions, but tens of millions and even hundreds of millions of pounds wide. It is not just a question of the Government's failure to compensate universities for the extra national insurance burden imposed on them as on all employers by the Chancellor, or to allow them to pay their clinical teachers in line with health service doctors, although both failures offer penetrating evidence of ministers' lack of judgement about the real needs of the universities.

It is now a question of whether this Government is prepared to recognize its responsibility for the resourcing of excellence. Arguably Britain's universities have been the finest in Europe since the destruction of the 19th-century German university tradition by the Nazis half a century ago. Who could repeat that statement with any

confidence today? Until very recently Britain possessed institutions of global excellence - the London School of Economics in social sciences, Imperial College in physics and engineering, and so on. If such places cling to that high status today, it is by their fingertips. Some doubt that they do. They say that the loss of staff, the devaluation of their salaries and status, the failure to recruit, the shortage of up-to-date equipment have eroded those former traditions of institutional excellence. They have been neglected rather than nurtured - with the sad result that British universities are sliding into a kind of penurious provincial excellence. Even Oxford and Cambridge are not exempt from this general trend.

Ministers offer two defences. First, they say this analysis is far too gloomy and deny that there is any serious threat to the excellence of Britain's universities. In evidence they call our impressive total of Nobel Prize winners - although *sotto voce* they may also hint that the universities produce too many science superstars and too few industrially minded technologists. But today's Nobel Prize winners are the result of yesterday's investment, the great expansion of the universities in the 30 years after the war. Second, more hesitantly, they say Britain cannot afford world-class universities. Yet higher education's share of our GNP is low by European and North American standards.

Whether British universities can maintain, or for the cynics ever recover, their place on the top of the world is doubtful. Such excellence is so much more difficult to build than to destroy. Of course the University of Texas with billions of dollars can buy such excellence. The politicians of that state are demonstrating a foresight that has deserted the statesmen of this great nation. The idea that Sir Peter Swinerton-Dyer's present selectivity exercise, robbing Peter of a million here to pay Paul there, is an adequate response to the growing problem of the resourcing of excellence cannot be taken seriously. It does not begin to measure up to the alarming scale of this problem. The responsibility for an effective and inevitably expensive solution rests squarely with ministers. No amount of "efficiency" by universities, or clever footwork by the UGC can provide one for them. If British universities suffer an irrecoverable loss of their former excellence the blame will be theirs - is theirs if the evidence of last week's public expenditure statement is correct.

Insupportable argument

About the only successful aspect of Sir Keith Joseph's abortive review of student support was the manner of its abandonment: a written answer slipped out in the House of Commons to coincide with the autumn spending statement. A press release was duly issued, but the timing produced its desired effect and the announcement went virtually unreported and unremarked in Parliament.

In these days when presentation is all, that may represent a successful outcome. In reality, it was an object lesson in bad government; an ill-considered proposal which wasted time and money, delayed other important business and then was cut off without even addressing the very real problems associated with a system which all sides deem unsatisfactory. What was billed as a review of student support is now exposed as no more than another attempt to satisfy Sir Keith's obsession with loans.

The whole exercise was tinged with failure before it began, born as it was of Sir Keith's enforced retreat over cuts in student grants. Loans were identified from the start as the main item on the agenda of the review, but the stated intention was to produce a radical shake-up of the system in which loans were only one possibility. Given that they had been dismissed as impolitic less than two years earlier, it was not a strong possibility at that. Nevertheless, the loans file was dusted off yet again and the Green

Paper on higher education was postponed so that two consultative exercises could be linked. The cost for the Green Paper was to render the final document much less comprehensive and to allow some of the Government's few initiatives to be overtaken by events. In the mean time the banks were consulted again and found to be less than enthusiastic about loans, the United States was visited again and found to have serious reservations about its own system, and the Cabinet was approached again and was found not to have changed its collective mind.

In view of the bruising reception given to all Sir Keith's attempts to alter the grants system, it became inevitable that the review would not proceed. One last attempt to introduce loans by another name - the graduate tax - came to nothing before last week's announcement that "no useful purpose" would be served by persevering with the review. But the inevitability of the decision does not make it the right one.

On the very day of the announcement, the Government was preparing for an increase of some £2 million in the cost of student awards, with the likelihood that the value of the grant will decline still further even at this level of spending. The Conservative backbenchers' continue to murmur against the cost of parental contributions, the students themselves see the

grant falling behind inflation year after year and the Government sees expenditure continuing to rise. How can it be that no purpose would be served by reviewing the situation?

The fact is that the student support system has become confused and outdated. The banks will confirm that loans have arrived already in practice, as even those lucky enough to receive the full mandatory grant find that it does not enable them to make ends meet. Indeed, by allowing students to claim social security benefits at Christmas and Easter, the Government admits as much. At the same time, in many parts of the country, mass unemployment makes it extremely difficult for students to find vacation jobs to supplement their income.

No longer is there any clear indication of what the grant is really expected to do. Its value in comparison with Youth Training Scheme allowances or social security benefits is a matter of accident. The plight of students on valuable courses which do not attract mandatory grants has been all but forgotten. Even if there is no money available to fund reforms, there remain a number of serious issues to consider. Student awards represent one of the largest items in the budget of the Department of Education and Science and the system cannot be left to fall into expensive disrepair simply because a pet project has been rejected.

Laurie Taylor



Doctor Ransom, you are a 32-year-old, ex-professor of electronics at present living in the south of France and your chosen subject is the Government's Higher Education Policy with Particular Reference to Universities.

That's right.

You have two minutes, starting NOW. What is the name of the Comptroller-and-Auditor-General?

Mr Gordon Downey.

Cor-rect. How did Mr Downey's recent report characterize the 1981 University Restructuring Exercise?

Erm... Disorder, Damage, and... erm...

Time's up.

Discontinue.

I'll accept your answer. What is the nearest million was the size of the redundancy bill in universities?

£238 million.

Cor-rect. And what was the popular phrase among senior academics for the early retirement scheme?

Pass.

How many academic redundancies and retirements were needed to meet the target?

Three thousand.

Cor-rect. And how many look-place?

Four thousand, four hundred.

Cor-rect. How many years did the UGC and the CVCP say was essential for restructuring to be carried out successfully?

Five.

Cor-rect. And how many were allocated?

Three.

Cor-rect. What was the reaction of Sir Keith Joseph to the news that he was making the cuts in too-short-a-period?

I've started, so I'll finish.

Cor-rect. Which university departments were supposed to be protected against reduction?

Engineering, technology and computer science.

Cor-rect. And which departments experienced greater than average reduction in posts?

Engineering, technology and computer science.

Cor-rect. So what is the technical name for the Government's policy towards universities since 1981?

A complete cock-up.

Cor-rect. Doctor Ransom, your time is up. You scored eleven on the round. You passed on just one. The phrase used by senior academics to describe the early retirement plan was "gravy train".

Ah, yes.

Thank you, Doctor Ransom. We'll see you in the next round when your chosen subject will be Henry the Eighth's Restructuring Policy with Particular Reference to Monasteries.

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Letters to the editor

The training of architects

Sir, — Your page on architectural education (*THE*, November 15) gives an all too accurate picture of the current state of play. This resulted from two quite different pressures: the Royal Institute of British Architects' wish to protect its current members from the challenges offered by (better educated) recent graduates and the Government's desire to minimize the costs of education.

The first, of course, was reflected in the Esher report, which is hardly surprising since the Esher working party was dominated by RIBA nominees while the second is reflected in Her Majesty's Inspectorate's report and in that of Higginson's working party on architecture intakes. All three ignored certain vital factors.

Despite the many gloomy forecasts, employment prospects for graduates in architecture have been consistently good over the years. But while architects are highly employable, many practices complain that they are under-employed. Their workload, and hence their profitability, may be down by 50 per cent from the early 1970s, but that was the time of a building boom when far too many buildings were thrown up with far too little thought.

That still happens because too few buildings are designed by architects. As gentlemanly professionals, architects have by no means pushed themselves. Two years ago indeed, the RIBA, and the Architects' Registration Council, both changed their codes of conduct so that instead of being confined to the design and supervision of buildings, acting as agents for their clients, they can now do many other things. They can act as contractors, and as developers, can manufacture building materials and so on. Few have done so partly because of their natural reticence and partly because, despite their complaints, they prefer to stick to that least profitable part of architecture.

The resulting crisis was discussed by John O'Leary in this journal (November 15) and the RIBA has now done its best to clear the air, disown the nonsensical document and assure people like me that the danger is past. But the smell of danger lingers on; the groves of academe are haunted by paranoia.

Even if the chaos has been cleared up, there are issues that must affect the long term prospects of architectural education. The threats of transitory planning have brought the heads of schools together in transitory accord and it may be that their influence within the Architects Registration Council of the UK (the body which gives official recognition to architects) may change for ever the relationship between the RIBA and the schools. But there is another threat to the present system that may ultimately change the role of the profession altogether.

That is the EEC directive of June 10, 1985 on the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other qualifications in architecture. After several dozen "whereas" and "whence" clauses, it directs that each member state shall recognize the diplomas etc and give their holders the right to take the title architect and practise accordingly. It then outlines the curriculum for every school and directs that the total length of education and training shall be a minimum of four years' full-time or three years' full-time and three years' part-time.

Two results must follow. Minima in the UK being quickly converted into maxima, it must mean that the courses will be reduced in length. I believe that will be good; they are too long and require more training in practice. On the other hand it makes nonsense of the manpower planning that the Government and the professions in this country have recently engaged in. It seems perverse to close schools here and welcome graduates from elsewhere. That may of course be good for the state of the art. But it

that is to say designing.

But others are taking it from them: surveyors are by no means so circumspect and increasingly they are taking over not merely the costing of buildings, but also their design. You only have to look at the sign-boards on building sites to realize that. They are doing so with great entrepreneurial flair and if architects were to display one-tenth of their initiative there could be no question of too many graduates. On the contrary we would need twice as many. Significantly, too the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors has refused to collaborate with the National Advisory Board on an Esher type exercise.

Of course, one expects surveyors to do well with their costs and their construction, but there is much more to architecture than these. Not that you would think so from HMI's report. Since this was produced largely by engineers, it is hardly surprising that they emphasize the technological aspects of building at the expense of all other considerations. But we have all around us the evidence of what happens when architecture is reduced to mere technology. In the prefabricated schools of the 1950s, and those prefabricated flats of the 1960s which are now so expensive to maintain that many are being demolished.

It was precisely to correct the evident faults of such technology-dominated architecture that in the early 1960s the schools began to reinforce those studies in the history, the psychology and the sociology of architecture which the inspectors dismiss contemptuously, as "contextual".

But it takes time for students to absorb such a wide spectrum of studies: building construction, structures and economics, the science of heat, light and sound, the apparently despised contextual studies and the integration of all these things into coherent designs with their appropriate

aesthetic and symbolic content. This is why architecture courses are so long: divided between full-time study (five years) and practice (two years). Clearly the pressures are on for the full-time studies to be reduced. Yet the very inspectors who advocate this are, at the same time party to the extension of certain engineering courses from the traditional three-year BSc to the four-year "enhanced" BEng. Mine is not the only school to have been approached by engineers for advice on how to "enhance" the design contents of their courses.

Even if, like the Government, one looks just at value for money in education then all this seems even more curious. Given current NAB weighting factors, a four-year engineering course costs $4 \times 1.72 = 6.92$ units, whereas a five-year architecture costs $5 \times 1.51 = 7.55$ units.

As far as the future is concerned, after 10 years of discussion the EEC has finally published its directive on architecture which means that in two years' time any graduate from any school in the EEC will be free to practise in this country. Since Turin alone has some 18,000 students of architecture, the cutting in this country of a few hundred places will be a mere drop compared with the flood from the EEC since British architectural education is recognized worldwide as the best integrated of all. And since the results are there for all to see, it will be extremely unfortunate if, thanks to the RIBA's blinkered self-interest and short-sighted Government economics, this country is exposed once again to the dire effects on human health, happiness and well-being of those wretched kinds of building which half-educated architects find it all too easy to design.

Yours faithfully,
GEOFFREY BROADBENT
Professor of Architecture and Head of School,
Portsmouth Polytechnic.

Friends and foes

Sir, — Recently the committee of the National Advisory Body for public sector higher education (NAB) to its friends — and they are few — decided to increase the "target" number of students next year by 5500, without any commensurate increase in funding. Money is the Government's responsibility; target numbers are NAB's.

Last year the self-same body gave a solemn pledge that it would tolerate no further diminution in the "unit of resource", the amount of funding per student. It has just tolerated it, to the tune of 5 per cent, or to be more accurate, leapt at with alacrity. Its words are revealed to be written in sand-shifting sand.

The motion was carried by five to three. One may readily forgive the chairman, the Hon. Peter Brooke, MP, since as parliamentary under-secretary of state, he is bound by Government policy, which may be simply expressed as "no more money". He did not invent his own anomalous dual position. With greater difficulty, one may forgive the chairman of the NAB board, Christopher Ball, who disregarded in his vote the majority view of that board; he does after all come from a university (Oxford) which is world-renowned, but not for its advancement of democratic principle and practice.

It is impossible to forgive the three Labour local authority members, Cllrs Mrs Farrington, Mrs Harrison, and Pearson. They voted solidly to pull Conservative chestnuts (more students, no more money) out of the fire. They apparently did so in order to widen access. Unhappily, access to a second-class higher education has never been what the Labour Party has advocated. This was a straightforward betrayal of principle.

Those voting against the proposition consisted of two Conservative local education authority members, and a Liberal. It is a sad day for me, as a former Labour Minister of State for Education, when I have publicly to concede that the friends of the public sector are not in my own party.

Yours etc,
GERRY FOWLER,
Rector,
North East London Polytechnic.

Sir, — Well done Ray Rickett for publicly putting on record the real problem of the funding of public sector higher education (*THE*, November 22). The UGC, and its friends, simply do not wish the public sector to be funded on an equal basis with the private sector. CNA degrees are equivalent in status to university degrees. I say the UGC and its friends because it is very interesting to note what a mixed bunch they are:

1. The Government which at least was honest enough to say in the Green Paper that it believed that the difference in funding should be maintained.
2. The universities themselves, their academic staff and those who represent them who really believe that polytechnics and colleges are inferior institutions producing an inferior graduate, although they don't actually say so.
3. The local authorities who, in spite of their protestations, wish to maintain control of their institutions but (on the evidence of the last NAB committee) are not prepared to fight for the resources for them.
4. The NAB board who have spent the last four years finding more and more precise ways of dividing up less and less.
5. Lastly, and sadly, my academic colleagues in PSHE, the majority of whom are university educated and who really have not been prepared to believe in themselves and fight for equality.

Yours faithfully,
DR ROGER ADAMS,
Head of Combined Studies,
Plymouth Polytechnic.

others do Y, and also prefer to do X, whenever others do X, then choose X." It gives this advice to altruists no less than to egoists and to the considerate as much as to the insensitive. The puzzle is whether the advice can be faulted, when its upshot is self-defeating.

To make a fresh example, each for public-spirited university must do its best for its own parish. So must each public-spirited head of department. The upshot threatens to poison public spirit and higher education too. What



Geneva accord: Gorbachov and Reagan last week

Russian studies

Sir, — The widely-welcomed Geneva accord recommends "measures to promote Russian language studies in the United States and English language studies in the USSR".

In our country, Russian language studies have been squeezed out of most state schools and cut back at tertiary level. If we cannot make good the losses suffered during the decade by Atkinson at least let us ensure that all surviving Russian departments in our universities are

preserved, even though most of them are by any standards small.

The new era of improved Anglo-Soviet relations is now upon us. The study of that minority language once used by Pushkin, Dostoyevski, Tolstoy and Chekhov and now spoken by 270,000,000 people, deserves and requires greater encouragement.

Yours faithfully,
A. D. P. BRIGGS,
Reader in Russian language and literature,
Bristol University.

Matter of choice

Sir, — N. L. Lawrie points out (*THE*, November 22) that some people do take their litter home. Yes; but so many do not that Britain is grubbier than anyone wants. In general, some glaring failures of public choice would vanish, if everyone chose what is best for everyone. But not everyone does. So the practical question remains: when do people choose what sums to a public good and when do they not? The theoretical riddle goes deeper

New crackdown on student violence

by Peter Aspdon and David Jobbins

Manchester University is to take a tough line over the treatment of Mr David Waddington, the home office minister who was spat at and jeered during a student meeting earlier this month.

It is to set up a disciplinary inquiry into the event, regarded by ministers as one of the most serious infringements yet of free speech on campus. Money is the Government's responsibility; target numbers are NAB's.

Last year the self-same body gave a solemn pledge that it would tolerate no further diminution in the "unit of resource", the amount of funding per student. It has just tolerated it, to the tune of 5 per cent, or to be more accurate, leapt at with alacrity. Its words are revealed to be written in sand-shifting sand.

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This week, Sir Keith Joseph, secretary of state for education and science, attacked the "barbarism" shown by some students and spoke of his fear that people with perfectly legal views would not be invited to university campuses because a minority might create trouble.

"This is something the vice chancellors — and we should take very seriously in account," he told the Commons education select committee.

Vice chancellors have still not decided the final details of their code of practice on free speech on campus despite growing impatience from Sir Keith.

They claim that legal difficulties are preventing the release of the document which will advise universities on how to best guarantee freedom of speech on their premises.

Although the CVCP's general purposes committee broadly agreed the basic outlines of the code last week, the problems caused by many of the issues involved have caused them to take further legal advice.

A spokesman for the committee said the definitions of public and private meetings, the demarcation of powers between the police and the chairmen of meetings and the differences between English and Scottish law were all problems which were hindering rapid release of the guidelines.

Sir Patrick Neill, the new vice-chancellor of Oxford and a distinguished lawyer, sat on the committee and was said to be unhappy about some of the wording contained in the code.



Liverpool University student Stephen French demonstrates the kick-boxing style which won him a world title at Wembley recently. A product of the university's access course, designed primarily for black students, he is in the first year of a sociology degree and hopes to stay on for a PhD.

Grant for study of retirement

by Maggie Richards

London University is to receive a £300,000 grant to establish a new centre for retirement study, believed to be the first of its kind in Europe. Through its extramural department, the university is to receive funding from the Health Education Council over a three-year period.

The new centre will focus on health issues arising from retirement, early retirement and redundancy. It intends to collaborate with employers, trade unions and organizations for the elderly in improving training programmes for workers in the field.

It also intends to develop personal counselling techniques to assist those approaching retirement; and to conduct action-based research among retired people.

Establishment of the centre is the result of work conducted by the extramural department over the past three years on retirement planning. The research fellow for the project Mr Allan Coleman is to become co-ordinator for the new centre.

"The intention is to get more closely involved with the community, particularly by providing and academic input for practitioners through the organization of workshops, seminars, conferences and courses," he said this week.

Before the end of the three-year period, the Health Education Council will review the work of the centre with a view to extending funding for a further two years.

SDP unveils training strategy

An eight point strategy for the education and training of 16 and 19 year old mapped out by the Social Democratic Party this week would signal an end to full-time employment until age 18, but the plan envisages a progressive and more integrated qualification system.

Tertiary Education for All is the SDP's response to the crisis facing young people who find themselves unemployed, untrained and lacking in any sense of clear purpose about their futures, as well as the crisis of skills training to the national economy.

An immediate £200 million cash injection is proposed as part of a crash programme which would have the aim of reversing the decline in levels of skills training. The programme outlined in the paper would have a limited life-span using existing institutions and training mechanisms before being dovetailed into the reformed system.

Under the reformed system, employers would be legally obliged to release 16 and 17 year old employees for two days study a week. The SDP acknowledge that this would effectively mean the end of full-time employment for 16 and 17 year olds, but emphasize that job-creation efforts must be concentrated on the older and longer term unemployed.

Whereas attendance would not be compulsory for employers, it should be made legally binding on employers, the paper stresses. Training in the extended two-year Youth Training Scheme should be stepped up to at least two days a week and lead to nationally recognized qualifications.

Many employers may find it profitable under the reformed system to take on two part-time youths to fill one job, suggests the SDP, with the government footing the cost of the job-split.

An interim proposal is that a Young Student Grant paid directly to a student should make up the difference between the child allowance and supplementary benefit — as an incentive to continue studies. In addition, a "young returners grant" should be paid to the unemployed or students returning to full-time education after a year on YTS or to boost numbers on craft or

NERC reviews research priorities

by Jon Turney
Science Correspondent

The Natural Environment Research Council is starting a complete review of scientific priorities to maximize the social and economic returns from its research.

The review is the next stage in development of a strategy for the NERC to live within a reduced budget after management changes and staff cuts introduced in the council's first corporate plan at the start of 1985.

A draft of the second NERC corporate plan, sent to staff this week for discussion, says the review of priorities will be based on four general criteria: intrinsic excellence and timeliness, pertinence to the objectives of the NERC, enhancement of the country's overseas prestige, and the social and economic benefits likely to accrue.

In the latest NERC annual report, also published this week, the council chairman Mr Hugh Fish says that scientific excellence will still be the main aim, but that aside "selection of priorities will need to be related much more to social and economic benefits".

The council has not yet worked out how to assess these benefits, but will make some trial evaluations next year

in selected areas. Mr Fish stressed this week that it was important to try and develop measures of research output, though these would be crude at first. The new draft corporate plan lists a number of research areas of high priority, without any further ranking. They include marine and freshwater science, atmospheric studies and geology in Antarctica, and separate sets of topics for the other three main divisions of NERC science.

In the earth sciences, priorities are geological surveying of the UK, deep-sea geology, continental shelf structure, mineral resources and Antarctica. In marine sciences, the subjects highlighted are global oceanographic and climate studies, ocean circulation, deep ocean ecosystems, UK coastal ecology and oceanography and marine biology. And the priority headings for the terrestrial and freshwater sciences are hydrology, ecology, virology, freshwater biology and studies of plants.

The plan says detailed priorities in each of these areas will be developed using specific criteria, and the external criteria will differ from one area to another. New initiatives are likely to be placed with universities rather than NERC institutes, as shown by the

recent establishment of the Robert Hooke Institute for Atmospheric Research at Oxford University. Mr Fish said this week he would much prefer to expand chosen areas by strengthening a few existing university groups than by starting a new laboratory.

Mr Fish said the council was meeting its targets for staff reductions, which call for loss of 900 posts by 1990. The new plan suggests there may be slight relaxation of targets as the councils income from research commissions shows signs of exceeding original expectations, but the overall thrust of the manpower plan is unchanged.

The council wants to end up with three groups of staff, permanent researchers doing core work on money from the Department of Education and Science, a group of short-term contract workers doing DES-backed work, and a separate short-term group handling commissioned projects.

Mr Fish said he was hoping the council would be awarded £2 million from the £15 million recently added to the DES science budget for next year.

AUT split on ballot money

The university lecturers' union is to consider whether to join the small band of TUC-affiliated unions prepared to accept Government money for ballots.

A call for a ballot on whether or not to accept Government money is to be discussed at the winter council of the Association of University Teachers in Newcastle next month.

Union leaders are likely to resist the demand, from Dundee University, at least until the TUC's own position on the issue becomes clearer.

The AUT has already held one ballot, to determine the attitude of its members to its pay strategy, and is currently carrying out another which could lead to the first national strike action in the union's history.

Other universities are to press for a ballot on establishing a political fund, which some delegates believe will be necessary to protect the union when it campaigns against Government policy.



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Higher Education Research Group
Department of Management Studies
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DON'S DIARY

MONDAY

I began this period of maternity leave with high hopes of what I would get done in the way of personal projects. I started reading Proust as I fed the baby but here she is nearly weaned and I haven't finished volume one. Has she imbibed any culture with her milk? I admit to cheating and feeding her other authors in between: Oakley, Russell, Paley, Jameson, Griffin. However must get on with my conference paper but shall wait until relevant inter-library loans appear. Feel very tired after three teaching breaks in the night. Realize that I'm getting heavy cold from standing on Brighton train waiting for woman colleague's car. Watch *Blue Peter* with the children. It too went to Brighton but has a more moving piece of film on the birth of a baby to the presenter who's always forgetting his lines - seems he's OK at something anyway.

Just got both children in bed and quiet when husband comes in shouting "Hello."

WEDNESDAY

Notice in the mirror that my cold has made me prematurely festive. Galko down the road to pay bills before collecting son and neighbour's child from school at 3.20. Pushchair technology has improved in the last five years but manners haven't; people still stand and stare as I back into shops or temporarily abandon my daughter at checkouts she can't get through.

Usual gossip at school gate over colds, tummy bugs, work, childcare and what on earth happens in this school which does not allow us parents inside the gates. Five-year-olds tend to keep the world of school to themselves and as usual my son has had "can't remember" for lunch. From what he does tell me school dinners don't sound any more nutritious than the crisps and sweets packed in the boxes most children carry.

THURSDAY

No news from my referees on my latest job application - stare at the calendar to pretend it's not too late yet. Re-read the application and get angry again about the "equal opportunity employers" bit when the second space on the form is for "number and ages of children". This time I put "5, 9 months + nanny".

Take daughter for third immunization, kept waiting as usual and usual disbelief over our different surnames and my imminent return to work. Vow to add extra line to note on our letter-box which should now read: NO FREE NEWSPAPERS - NO HEALTH VISITORS.

Postman brings agenda for my first meeting as a parent governor of son's primary school. Remember headmistress's bleak look when I mentioned at the hustings the school's lack of communication with parents. Looks like I'm the only woman. No sign of constitution however, must get hold of it.

FRIDAY

Various inter-library loans arrive from work. Must get on with my paper. Fortunately this clashes with my daughter's desire to practice this week's new trick, forward crawling. Drive in nearby posh town to vary weekend shopping and realize that some women actually dress up to do this fearsome task. Italy bites the trolley as usual. Metal fatigue causes her to sleep one hour before lunch so I start inter-library loans but veer off into August issue of professional journal. This says that women don't get top jobs in libraries because they don't apply - stuff and nonsense - I shall publish my applications soon.

SATURDAY

Craft fair at the school. Buy my son a pebble with a mouse painted on it and a snowman for the Christmas tree. Quite a varied show but I wonder who would want to buy most of the things. Proceeds are to go to building a new music and drama room at the school. Amid great excitement we have a cup of tea in the canteen sitting at the very table where "can't remember" is consumed and the wobbly bench is demonstrated. Seems that school dinner tables are less than a third of the total - how soon before they're stopped altogether?

Postman brings the latest little book for my collection, a real miniature this time from Gleniffer Press. Allow myself five minutes to look at it, my son prefers the box and my daughter the packing, my husband the fact that I paid for it out of consultancy fees so we are all happy.

Put advert for a nanny into the local paper which costs £20. Hope we find one as good as last time. We'll share her if she's agreeable with another family which should boost her earnings, and the babies' interest. Have realized with a second child how much they gain from their position. Apart from a sibling relationship - she only laughs for her brother - there are so many more toys around (and cookers) and we are so much more confident as parents.

SUNDAY

Why is it that I hate Sundays? Perhaps it's a legacy from boarding school - hours in chapel and compulsory letter writing. Perhaps it's simply the impending doom of Monday, although the domestic doom is rather different from paid work. Buckets of nappies or zooming down the motorway into the same old problems of how to buy books with very little money.

Children don't understand about having a lie-in, and that excellent programme *Rub a dub dub* has ended. What seems like a cosy bed for two becomes far too small for a wiggly five-year-old and a crawling nine months who's cross about the pre-conference wearing regime.

At breakfast my husband tells me that the Booker prize winner is only 38, so there's hope for me yet. I can see it now... "after the worldwide success of 'How to catalogue' Ms Chapman followed on with a brilliant first novel..." only trouble is when do I get time to start? Shouldn't I dispense with old Marcel first? Perhaps when I return to work.

Liz Chapman

The author, who is at present on maternity leave, is acquisitions librarian at Brunel University.

Bodleian charges criticized

An Oxford don has called for the abolition of charges for scholars wanting to study in the university's Bodleian Library.

Mr Jim Reed, tutor in modern languages at St John's College, says the charges only just cover administration costs and create a bad impression in the academic world which depends on generosity and co-operation.

Students and scholars from outside Oxford can pay £2 for a ticket for two consecutive days, £3 for 12 separate visits or £20 for a four-year ticket. Charges began in 1983.

Writing in the revived *Oxford Magazine*, Mr Reed points out that the

Bodleian was granted the right in the 17th century, as a copyright deposit library, to receive a free copy of any book published in Britain. This was done as "a general public good", he says. He suggests the Bodleian should either encourage voluntary contributions or charge visitors to see specially mounted exhibitions.

Mr Julian Roberts, acting librarian at the Bodleian, expressed some sympathy with Mr Reed's view, but said visitor's cards were needed for security reasons and charges helped pay for multi-media admission staff who also advised scholars on how to use the reading rooms.

DES 'tinkering' with grants

by David Jobbins

Last summer's Cabinet decision to drop plans for partial student loans has put a stop to any attempt at sweeping changes in the existing grants system.

Education ministers believe that only small adjustments to the system can now be considered - and it was this realization that lay behind the abandonment of the promised Green Paper.

Sir Keith Joseph, secretary of state for education and science, said this week he remained personally committed to loans and that the Government had decided not to pursue the idea "for the time being."

He told the Commons select committee on education, science and the arts that without partial loans what remained in the Green Paper "was not worth publishing."

V-Cs slam Government for 'gross dereliction of duty'

by Peter Aspdon

Vice chancellors have accused the Government of a "gross dereliction of duty" over its abandonment of a proposed review of student financial support.

The attack came from the chairman of the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals, Mr Maurice Shock, who said many students today faced considerable hardship because of the falling real value of grants and shortfalls in parental contributions.

He said he favoured a mixed grants and loans system, which would work in an organized way via a tripartite agreement between banks, universities and the Government.

At the moment, there was only an "undeclared, unworked out loan and debt system", which was unsatisfactory.

The vice chancellors have made a formal statement of opposition to the Government's views, describing the

"Publication might have led people to expect more expenditure, and there is no more expenditure, in the Government's mind, available for this purpose."

"Had partial loans been supported there may over the years have emerged some savings which could have been used to some extent for changes which would have cost more money and thus justified the consultation paper."

Sir Keith said that the system would now remain effectively unchanged - although he did not want to rule out the possibility of "relatively modest" changes in the future in response to specific arguments.

His appearance before the select committee came only hours after the new under secretary for education and science, Mr George Walden, in his first Commons appearance, admitted there had been a reduction in the purchasing

power of student grants and confirmed that a fall in value of 17 per cent since 1979 was "roughly correct."

Labour higher education spokesman Mr Andrew Bennett warned that the situation would get worse if the 1986 increase was only 2/3 per cent, as could be calculated roughly from the autumn mini-budget.

"Many students genuinely have to make a choice between buying books at the beginning of term and going short of meals towards the end of term," he said.

But Mr Walden, while expressing sympathy for students, said it was right they should share some of the burden "which many have to shoulder in continuing to hold down public expenditure and thus help to regenerate our economy to the ultimate benefit of everyone, student or not."



Big demand for Infotech students

Information technology postgraduate students are being snapped up by employers and the education sector within months of completing advanced courses and research programmes, an Institute of Manpower Studies survey has revealed.

More than 40 per cent of the 1984 students on IT advanced courses found jobs within one month of finishing their studies, with 84 per cent employed by April this year. Of the sample of 97 IT students who completed research programmes in 1984, only one remained out of work in April, the survey, conducted by IMS research fellow Helen Connor, found.

The favourable take-up rate confirms widespread fears over IT skill shortages and the increasing market demand for well-qualified technologists. In a single year, the Science and Engineering Research Council increased students awards for IT advanced courses from 200 (in 1982/83) to 1,000 (in 1983/84). Consequently there were worries that the increased student intake would be unable to obtain jobs upon completion of the courses, one of the main reasons for the destination studies.

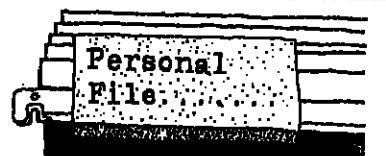
More than half of the advanced course students surveyed joined companies in the mainstream IT industry, either in electronics, aerospace, telecommunications or computing services. IT-user companies in the manufacturing, commercial and service sectors claimed 28 per cent of the students, with 17 per cent going to universities or polytechnics.

One of the report's most noticeable findings is that students with non-technical education backgrounds (degrees in arts, languages, business and social studies) were as successful in securing employment as students from more IT-related disciplines.

Of the research students surveyed, half were employed in the education sector in either research posts or teaching posts, with the balance in electronics companies or in computing services.

In spite of the promising employment outlook for future IT postgraduates, salary levels remain relatively low. On average, the students were found to earn between £7,000 and £9,000 per year with a narrow margin drawing a salary of more than £11,000.

All shipshape and Bristol fashion



by Karen Gold

If Bristol Polytechnic staff ever feel pushed around by their new director, they can console themselves with the thought that during his holidays people on boats shout at him.

At Bristol, just as in his time as acting director at South Bank, Alf Morris is likely to run a tight ship. But during the summer he reverts to a more third mate on the Ocean Youth Club's 72-foot ketch that sails around the British Isles.

He takes a mathematical approach to sailing, as befits an accountant. He hears the sailing around Bristol is good, but he hasn't worked out the tides yet.

His background means he probably has more of a grasp of the way higher education is funded than almost anyone else. His first foray out of the huge accountancy firm Deloitte, Haskins and Sells was to Sussex University in the 1970s, where he was senior research fellow in higher education.

Previously he had done an MA in financial control, Lancaster University, but he never took a first degree, having qualified as a chartered accountant. In 1979 he was called out of industry again - from his post as financial adviser to the Arthur Guinness Group - to act as adviser to a House of Commons Select Committee on Education, Science and the Arts.

In 1980 he threw his lot in once and for all with the polytechnics, becoming deputy director at South Bank. Since January this year he has been acting director, with the departure of director Dr John Bolton to temporary leadership of the Polytechnic of North London.

He was also drawn into public sector planning. A member of the National



Advisory Body's technical and data group - the one that crunches the numbers before the politicians get to see them - he has recently become its vice chairman.

He is not quite infallible though: a colleague recalls an occasion when Alf's calculator was broken and he had to work out the distribution of the advanced further education pool on the back of an envelope. He left off aught, leading to the assumption that the poly would receive an extra £20 million - a result he welcomed enthusiastically, only to discover in a later meeting that the real poly slice was only £2 million and not enough to satisfy anybody.

He likes things shipshape: he's a natty dresser and a highly organized administrator. "The only thing wrong with Alf is he is a bit too much like a machine," a colleague said. "I suppose that's what comes of being an accountant."

But he has bouts of gallantry: he sent a dozen red roses to a woman member of the NAB secretariat when South Bank got the student numbers it wanted - but he is also a serious promoter of women's interests particularly in polytechnic hierarchies. And daughter Jessica tells of his greatest claim to fame - he is the only dad she knows who can skateboard.

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ANTI-THESIS

Popular choice for Surrey

The list of putrons for Surrey University's £1 million appeal for a new building to house its music and dance activities reads like a programme for the greatest Covent Garden performance of the 20th century. Dame Margot Fonteyn, Sir Yehudi Menuhin, Sir Michael Tippett, Sir George Solti, Andy Peebles... Andy Peebles?

The band of Purdue University, Indiana, has come up with a bright idea for raising funds. At \$100 apiece, its members are selling souvenir bricks from the university's 62-year-old demolished chimney. Full marks for enterprise, less for tact. As a mark of appreciation to Purdue's president, Steven C. Beering, who has been storing two tons of the bricks in his garage for the past 12 months, the students have given him... a brick.

... A lobby of the Scottish Office this week as part of the Higher Education Week of Action hoped to end on the high note of a concert by St Andrews University's threatened music department. Presumably a rousing rendition of "Brother, can you spare a dime"...

Sheepish Leeds in round-up

Leeds Poly governors are taking no chances. After losing one of their five shortlisted candidates for the poly directorship (AIF Morris, acting director of South Bank Poly, to be Bristol Poly director) they rang all the remaining candidates plus one extra (Roy Bailey, a dean at Sheffield Poly) and summoned them to Leeds for final interviews three weeks early, at the end of this week.

Labour's charter for higher education, which offers the universities extra money in exchange for reforms, will not be launched at next week's National Union by Students conference after all.

The charter, which went to the party's national executive this week, is now not due for release until the New Year. Internal production problems and the slack Christmas period are blamed - certainly not the decision by the Socialist Education Association to denounce it as not radical enough.

Re-release is a hot potato

Sir Francis Drake did not introduce the potato to England. Nor did Sir Walter Raleigh. That is official. The news comes in a 650-page work, released 35 years after it was first published by Cambridge University Press: R. N. Salomon's *The History and Social Influence of the Potato*. Pointless can be traced back 8,000 years, according to Salomon, whose book includes chapters on potato varieties, Inca potatoes, Irish famines, and the potato in the realm of art. A whole chapter is devoted to the potato in Shakespearean and Jacobean drama: Shakespeare himself refers to it twice, though he was apparently an innocent compared with his contemporaries in referring to the "licentious connotation of the potato".

Not that Salomon always got it right: his new editor, Professor J. Hawkes, of Birmingham University, who is clearly a chip off the old block, points out that this "work of major scholarship" does contain some errors - such as the suggestion that the ancient Peruvians carried out facial mutilation to make themselves resemble potato-gods.

Fall in applications to universities

by Peter Aspden and Karen Gold

Applications to universities from home students for 1986-87 are down by 4.7 per cent from the corresponding period last year, according to figures released by the Universities Central Council on Admissions.

Although the overseas students figure is up by 14.8 per cent from 3,698 to 4,245, it is not enough to offset the home students drop from 58,078 to 55,362, which has led to a fall in total numbers of 3.5 per cent (61,776 to 59,607).

The figures released by the UCCA are based on application forms received so far, which represent about a third of the anticipated total. The council has warned that any subsequent estimate of the final total should be "treated with caution", as November and December are traditionally busy months.

Nevertheless, universities will be watching to see if the opposing trends of home and overseas students continue. They will also note the surprising figures relating to individual subjects, analysed by candidates' first preferences.

The biggest fall in applications is in computer studies, which has dropped by 19 per cent from 890 to 720. Civil engineering is down by 17.7 per cent, from 846 to 696, and mathematics also shows a fall of 15.3 per cent, from 2,007 to 1,699. Applications for pharmacy have fallen by 14.3 per cent, from 1,223 to 1,048.

On the other hand, candidates for

economics are up by 6.5 per cent, from 1,731 to 1,844, combined engineering and technology is up by 5.6 per cent, from 1,083 to 1,144, and law applications have risen by 5.4 per cent, from 4,071 to 4,290. Other small rises in applications are in mechanical engineering, combined social sciences and accountancy.

Meanwhile, applications to the new Polytechnics Central Admissions System have almost doubled in the last three weeks, going from 23,495 on November 1 to more than 52,000 this week.

Since this is the first year all applications to full time and sandwich degree and diploma courses in polytechnics have to go through PCAS, there are no figures to compare with former years. Predictions of the numbers of applicants have varied from 100,000 to 150,000.

Women applicants outnumbered men at the beginning of November by 12,026 to 11,469. Numbers of overseas applicants were very low - 663 altogether, with 430 of them men and 233 women.

Applicants to PCAS are allowed four choices, one fewer than the universities' five, and do not place their polytechnics in order of preference. At November 1 each applicant had made an average of 3.77 applications, suggesting that total applications would be substantially higher than in previous years when applicants had to write to each poly individually and applications averaged out at between two and three per person.

New faces but no new cash for British space centre

by Jon Turney Science Correspondent

The Government's recipe for the British National Space Centre, launched last week to co-ordinate research and development in space, includes new faces but no new money.

Mr Geoffrey Pattie, minister for information technology in the Department of Trade and Industry launched the new centre with the announcement that its first director-general will be Mr Roy Gibson, formerly the first director of the European Space Agency from 1975 to 1980.

He said the centre, based at the DTI's London headquarters, would develop a long-term strategy for the country, bringing together the existing work of the Science and Engineering and Natural Environment Research Councils, the DTI and the Ministry of Defence, under a total budget of £100 million a year.

The new centre, which has taken 10 months to set up, has been welcomed by the heads of both research councils involved. Professor Bill Mitchell, chairman of the SERC, said it was a step the councils had been urging for

many years.

But privately, research council officials are not encouraged by the launch of the centre with no extra funds from the Exchequer. The fact that councils will have to make a contribution towards office overheads for staff seconded to the centre is a sign the Government does not take the venture seriously, they say.

The main work underpinning the new strategy, which has yet to be detailed, will be done at the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough, where the DTI and the defence ministry already pay for a joint space technology programme, and at the SERC's Rutherford Laboratory in Oxfordshire.

Mr Pattie left the door open for further Government commitment to space, indicating that the strategy Mr Gibson and his staff will develop may involve new investments. In addition, the European Space Agency is already signed up for design studies connected with the \$8 billion project for a space station planned by the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration for the 1990s.

Tribute to successful WEA work

Tribute to the "overall success and achievement" of the Workers' Educational Association operating in an area of severe deprivation is paid in the latest report from Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Commenting on an appraisal of WEA activities in north-east England, the report highlights the "significant contribution" towards meeting the needs of the disadvantaged by non-traditional methods.

Acknowledging that the area covered by the WEA's northern district represents some of the worst deprivation in Britain, the report says that the staff involved - volunteers, part-time and full-time tutors - deserve recognition for the quality and range of provision.

The report also relays the concern of the WEA locally about changes to the system of grant-aided funding, implemented by the Department of Education and Science.

Humber hampered by lack of science

The absence of full-time science courses at Humber College of Higher Education has limited the college's capacity to respond to enrolment fluctuations, a report by HM Inspectors has revealed.

HMI recommend that the quality of work and resources are sufficient to enable the college to develop full-time Business and Technician Education Council Higher National Diploma courses which would result in more efficient provision. The survey of 21 advanced further education courses

and degrees also found that in science and engineering subject areas where the average staff age was high, there was a need for a planned in-service training programme to update knowledge of industry and commerce.

The report commends the facilities and teaching available in chemistry and biology, but finds fault with Higher National Certificate course work provision, suggesting that more could be done to update equipment and improve teaching styles. HMI found little use of the library was made by

HNC students, and the geotechnics laboratory used for the construction courses was ill-equipped and too small. Students in motor vehicle engineering and civil engineering were over-dependent on a single teacher, while teaching was slow and not sufficiently challenging, with theory classes lasting between two to four hours. Humber is the single provider of full-time public sector higher education in the area, and the major provider of part-time advanced further education.

Course organization 'better than teaching'

Part-time postgraduate management courses at Leicester Polytechnic are well organized, well resourced and provide good quality learning and high examination results, according to an HMI Inspectorate report.

The report on the part-time, two-year diploma in management studies and three-year Master of Business Administration courses says they are catering for different markets and do not overlap. Both aim to contribute to the effectiveness of managers at work. Staff have good subject knowledge,

are well qualified and highly committed. Teaching and staff accommodation are good, as is library provision. But although classes are well prepared and organized, teaching on the courses varied from good to barely acceptable, the report says. One third of classes seen relied heavily on teacher presentation, several without involving students. Staff need regular feedback on their effectiveness. The amount of use made of computers on the courses is disappointing, and in the MBA in particular, the

curriculum needs extending beyond staff interests to include more technology. Many staff only have dated professional experience, and although they are generally competent, hard-working and responsive to the need for development and change, staff contact with industry should be increased. Report by HMI on Leicester Polytechnic's diploma in management studies and master of business administration, available from DES publications, despatch centre, Honeypot Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex.



High technology celebrations: The Principal of the University College of North Wales, Bangor, Professor Eric Sunderland, uses a laser beam to cut the cake baked to mark the first 12 months of the college's centenary appeal, which has already raised £1.3 million. The cake was subsequently donated to the BBC's recent "Children in Need" appeal.

Ethnic minorities feel pinch on jobs

by David Jobbins

Only one college lecturer in every hundred is from an ethnic minority and is better qualified but more likely to be on a lower grade than white further education teachers, according to a survey published this week.

An investigation into the ethnic composition of the profession carried out for the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education showed a marked suspicion among lecturers from the ethnic minorities that race discrimination lay behind their unsuccessful attempts to find new jobs.

The survey shows that ethnic minority lecturers apply for more jobs than whites but their success in obtaining interviews was lower - 41 per cent compared with 57 per cent for whites. But once this hurdle was passed the survey disclosed no difference between the two groups - they were both successful in one out of every eight interviews.

Natfhe is now to press the local authority employers for agreement on new ways of eliminating racial discrimination from the process leading up to interviews. And this week it launched a strategy designed to eradicate racism both from the college curriculum and from its internal structures.

The union's policy document says that a pluralist multicultural curriculum has failed "to break patterns in racial inequality that pervade further and higher education."

Union officials fear that there is often little substance to the equal opportunities statements adopted by many authorities.

One problem already encountered is that the survey shows that the proportion of ethnic minority lecturers is very low - 1 per cent according to the survey.

Most are concentrated in London and other urban areas. Their origins closely match the population as a whole - 67 per cent Asians, 20 per cent Caribbean and 7 per cent African.

They teach mostly in business studies, engineering, maths and adult education. While many subject areas are more evenly balanced, craft was shown to be predominantly staffed by whites.

But the analysis shows that where members of minority groups applied for courses they were less likely to be successful than majority group members with equivalent qualifications and work experience.

The statistics, compiled over a four year period by Mr Derek Gardner, an adviser with the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work, also show that the number of successful ethnic minority applicants for courses has increased from 7.9 per cent to 11.8 per cent last year.

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3. The rules of a profession: company law, business taxation, management accounting techniques and advanced financial accounting.
4. Management accounting: decision making, control and audit, strategic planning and marketing and financial management.

Non-relevant and semi-relevant graduates in the UK and Eire have the option of taking exemption papers instead of the stage 1 papers. Exemptions to stages 2 and 3 are available depending on degree relevance.

For more information: Copies of the new ICMA syllabus may be obtained by completing the coupon and sending it to: Education and Training Department, The Institute of Cost and Management Accountants, 63 Portland Place, London W1N 4AB

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Don't take our moans for granted

I'm sure that many people - including some readers of this journal - think students moan a lot about grants. After all, student politicians (these days anyway) are only directly involved for a couple of years. Some of you have probably been hearing about the ups and downs of the grants system for more than 20 years. You probably think you've heard it all before. The unfairness of the parental contribution, student overdrafts, the spectre of student loans - on and on it seems to go.

But spare a thought for what has happened to student grants under the reign of Sir Keith. What this Government has done (apart from the painfully obvious) is put new life into old grumbles, and stimulate a new radicalism and excitement in even the most hard-bitten grants campaigner.

Just look at the record over the past 12 months. Last November we saw the slightly unnerving sight of Sir Keith being hounded around the House of Commons by a pack of angry backbenchers, who in turn were being chased around constituency committee rooms by herds of pet voters who had suddenly turned nasty. Then, after the infamous U-turn, we had the dawn of *Grants Review II* (or was it III), a saga to rival *Rocky*. Along the way we had an almost spontaneous outburst from thousands of ordinary students around the country, making Sir Keith the man who put the Rrrrrrri back in student radicalism.

The grants review limped along for almost a year, shedding a deadline here, a slab of credibility there, and finally being mugged by the Cabinet of Sir Keith's precious (some would say unhealthy obsession with) plans for student loans. And now we know the truth. Robbed of loans, the review has been quietly put to death. And I mean quietly - slipped out in a written parliamentary answer to a rather obvious Conservative backbench question. Ineptitude compounded by cowardice.

I was fortunate enough to be in the House for new boy Mr George Walden's debut in a grant debate recently. I don't know whether it was stage fright, a fit of honesty, or he was holding his brief upside down, but the minister admitted that National Union of Students' figures on the decline of the value of the grant (down 17 per cent since 1979) were roughly correct - so far the Department of Education and Science has put the fall at around 11 per cent. Yes folks, things actually are as bad as we say they are. Now we have the DES seal of approval for saying so.

But what was said in the House that night is nothing to what is going to be said behind the scenes by backbench Conservatives if the letters we have had from them are anything to go by. Fasten your safety belt, minister, it's going to be a bumpy ride. And you know full well whose fault it is.

Vicky Phillips

The author is Vice President, Welfare, National Union of Students.

OU faces student demand crisis

by Maggie Richards

A new crisis is looming for the Open University - it is being swamped by student demand. If the trend continues, it is anticipated by next year the university will be forced to turn away all first-time applicants for its undergraduate programme.

The university's student numbers were originally limited to 20,000 as part of the Government squeeze on OU spending, and in the late 1970s the numbers of applicants appeared to be levelling off.

But this year a record 56,077 people applied for places on the university's 1986 undergraduate programme, which starts in February. And there is now concern that next year's applications will top 30,000.

Under the OU's admissions system, students who have previously been unsuccessful in obtaining a place are given priority.

Currently, about 50 per cent of unsuccessful applicants reapply for a place.

But if rejection of first-time applicants becomes an established pattern, there are fears the university will lose many potential students who will not

feel it is worth making an application.

The university has not been able to pinpoint any single factor which has been responsible for the upsurge in demand, but it is felt the OU has become more widely recognized during recent years as its graduate numbers have increased, and this has led to a heightening of interest.

Demographic trends may also be playing a part. A larger percentage of the population is now in the mid-30s age group, and a large number of students take up studies with the OU during their 30s.

More women are applying for places, and there has been an increase in numbers of unemployed students and those hoping to combat redundancy by becoming better qualified.

In the fields of mathematics, science and technology, the OU is also experiencing demand from people who have acquired sub-degree qualifications and wish to continue their studies to graduate level.

In a bid to boost its cash funds the OU is considering launching a fund-raising appeal through the Open University Foundation. Plans for the appeal are only at a preliminary stage, but a committee has been established to examine the issue.



A three-year-old partially-sighted girl uses a "touch screen" developed in the research centre for the education of the visually handicapped, at Birmingham University. The centre has developed a range of software to enable the blind and partially-sighted to use microcomputers. One programme allows them to call up Teletext in large print, synthetic speech or braille, while their examiners get an immediate print version. Schoolchildren will be able to use many of the same computer-assisted learning aids used by their classmates because they will have control of type size, brightness and colour definition.

Cuts force change in community training plans

by Carolyn Dempster

The Manpower Services Commission plans to abandon the proposed ambitious expansion of training schemes under the Community Programme following a £28 million cut in its bid for funding for 1986/87.

A confidential memorandum circulated to MSC officials this week refers to a letter written by chairman Bryan Nicholson to the Paymaster General Mr Kenneth Clarke confirming that £15 million of the cuts required to balance the books in 1986/87 "will be found from a cut in training linked community programme plans (with equivalent, indeed slightly greater cuts in future years)".

Yet at a post-commission meeting briefing only days before, Mr Nicholson gave details of initiatives aimed at

benefiting the long-term unemployed and stated that with CP expansion, an additional 10,000 people a month could be accommodated on the programme - evidence that the commissioners knew nothing of the impending cuts.

It is also clear from the memorandum that officials hoped to talk the matter through with regional directors and area manpower boards in order to present a fait accompli to the commissioners at their January meeting, whereby it would be seen that the decision to let the training-linked programme bear the brunt of the cuts was irreversible.

The proposed cuts are justified on the basis that it will be less harmful as the provision is not yet in existence, and because the scheme has been "less

successful than most in attracting recruits and serves a clientele who are already benefiting from one MSC opportunity and are not deterred from moving on to a training programme after their CP job".

In October, 26,000 people joined the programme - the biggest monthly intake since the programme started in 1983 - bringing the total number of participants to 160,000. The MSC has targeted May 1986 for filling 230,000 places on the programme.

In addition to the TLCP cutback, the MSC has been advised to switch some 10 per cent of its adult training budget to programmes designed to boost the job creation potential of small firms and enterprises.

The refocusing of adult training programmes is recommended by Mr

Kenneth Clarke in a letter to Mr Nicholson, in which he states that the commission should plan on changes to take effect in 1986/87 with full implementation in 1987/88.

The four areas which he urges the commission to examine are training relevant to small business and management development with emphasis on the needs of Enterprise Allowance Scheme applicants; a sharper focus on skill requirements in relation to small business needs and expansion of the Open Tech programme.

Adult training's new remit will also have to be planned within the financial constraints of the cuts, and the feasibility of such a switch is already under consideration by MSC regional directors.

Cambridge lectures 'boring and irrelevant'

Lectures in arts subjects at Cambridge University are boring, irrelevant, badly timed and of dubious effectiveness, a students' survey shows.

The poll, which was answered by more than 1,200 students over an 18-month period, says that most lectures are unstimulating and seen by most students as simple exercises in dictating notes.

Most science subjects were taught in a boring but effective way, but arts subjects were found to be not relevant to courses. The average art student attended just 56 per cent of their lectures, according to the survey.

The questionnaire, distributed to 3,000 students by the students' union, asked students for their views on the whole range of teaching at Cambridge. Supervisions were generally well received, but there were calls for more explicit assessment of work and less time wasted in supervisions reading out essays or marking work.

The students were particularly critical of the insufficient provision for commenting on the quality of lectures or supervisors - they said a substantial teacher could be allowed to continue for years without anything being done.

Mr Michael Black, the student union academic affairs officer, said: "The university does not organize any training courses for staff members. Don't miss brilliant researchers but all too often their teaching leaves a lot to be desired."

"Over 50 per cent of students see lectures as nothing more than an exercise in dictating notes - at a university with high academic standards this is pathetic."

Adviser plan under fire

by Karen Gold

Government proposals for local authority advisers in polytechnics and colleges have come under fire from the Association of Polytechnic Teachers.

The Department of Education and Science paper, "The Role of Local Education Authority Advisory Services" says if authorities are to contribute to the planning and management of advanced further education, they need to "come to informed judgments on the quality of the work and of the institutions and staff delivering it, and on the appropriate directions for its development".

Advisers would strengthen links between authorities and their schools and colleges. But the APT argues that they would duplicate quality control work already carried out in polytechnics by validating, professional and funding bodies and HM Inspectorate. They would create extra work and come into conflict with those other bodies, so reducing institutions' responsiveness.

The association points out that compared with the universities, polytechnics are already subject to a multiplicity of controls: "The proposal that, starting from scratch and for no good reason, the local education authorities should set up an advisory service for public sector higher education as an additional input and control must seem ill-conceived to say the least."

Advisers would be expensive, but even so ones of sufficiently high quality could not be afforded. Advisers would have to keep up with lecturers of national and international standing in their subjects. Experience of local authority involvement in academic-related decisions - such as non-teaching staff numbers - had not been happy, and had sometimes conflicted with advice from validators or HMI.

Using advisers would also conflict with the roles of polytechnic directors and governing body. Teacher appraisal in higher education should be carried out nationally, not by local advisers as the paper suggests. The APT has long proposed that local authorities should carry out an "education audit", to be done by consultants who would have the necessary expertise.

The APT has urged colleges and polytechnics not to take more students next year, contrary to the recommendations of the National Advisory Body. The association has also written to the Council for National Academic Awards, asking it not to co-operate with the NAB's plans, which would lower the unit of resource (funding per student) by 6 per cent.

Ulster foundation courses at risk

A decision to raise entry standards at the University of Ulster over the next five years is putting the future of some foundation courses at risk.

Proposals have now been finalized, for consideration by the senate in December, which will reduce numbers on the foundation art course from 140 to 90 by 1991. These may be equivalent full time places comprising a mix of 120 part time and 30 full-time students.

Part-time foundation art places this year failed to attract any applicants, and fears have been voiced that the course could eventually consist simply of 30 full-time students.

The dean, Professor Roger Breakwell, argues that since foundation courses, which can be entered with two O levels, do not attract a mandatory award, they are not a suitable means of attracting students.

His assertion, however, that the North West College of Technology in Londonderry and the Rupert Stanley in Belfast could adequately cater for foundation art courses - which last year attracted 500 applicants at UU - is being vigorously opposed.

UU students argue that the move betrays a promise that all courses would be maintained. "Our objections are concerned with academic drift, with one area of a course being singled out and bracketed in the further education sector rather than in our new polyversity," the student spokesman, Mr Brendan Heaney, said.

'Thugs' claim as Tory numbers fall

by David Jobbins

Tory student leaders are compiling a dossier of alleged intimidation which they claim has impaired their recruiting effort at a number of universities and polytechnics.

Mr Mark McGregor, chairman of the Federation of Conservative Students, said the file would be sent to the Department of Education and Science to demonstrate the level of harassment faced by Conservative activists.

This week a group of moderate Conservative students hit out at the vice chancellors' plans to protect free speech in the universities while retaining the option to bar speakers if disruption is threatened.

Mr Chris Whiteside, chairman of the Conservative Student Affairs Research Group, said: "This could provide less courageous universities with an excuse to ban speakers even if many people want to hear them and their views are only offensive to an extreme, intolerant minority." He described the option as a "fatal loophole" in the vice chancellors' guidelines.

The dossier under preparation by FCS lists incidents at 15 institutions

where recruiting during freshers' week was affected by alleged intimidation. Mr McGregor put the blame on "leftist thuggery", claiming that in some cases stalls had been overturned.

"In one or two places we have no numbers as a direct result," he said. At Thames Polytechnic, for example, membership was down to 20 compared with 60 the previous year, while at Manchester Polytechnic there had been no members at all. "The stall there lasted four minutes," he said. "It was pushed over and posters torn up."

FCS says its membership increased at a number of institutions in the north - particularly Newcastle University and Huddersfield Polytechnic.

The conference to ratify the organization's new constitution has been put back until the New Year. It had been scheduled for next month but Central Office officials realized this would not give enough notice.

Controversial aspects are the rejection of secret postal ballots for the election of officers as recommended by a Central Office inquiry earlier this year, and the abolition of the post of life patron, occupied by former Prime Minister Mr Edward Heath.



Surrey's first step to £1 million

Surrey University has launched a £1 million appeal to build a new centre for its music, recording and dance studies courses. The centre will house purpose-built facilities for the university's BMus and BA Dance in Society degrees, which have been expanding over the last 15 years.

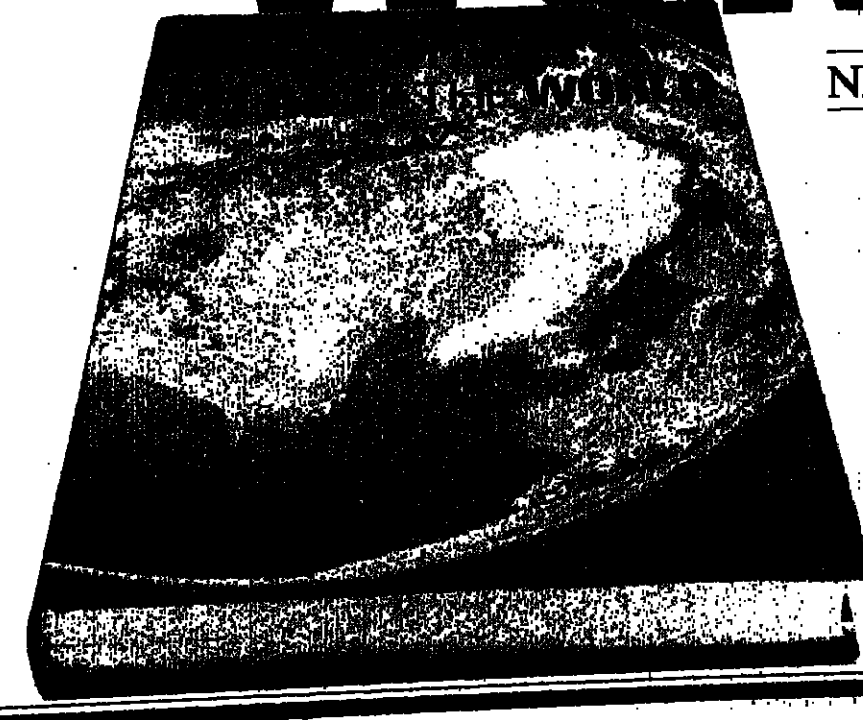
The university has already set aside £500,000 to finance the first stage of the building programme, but it is seeking to raise another £1 million to complete the scheme. The chairman of the appeal is Sir John Read, chairman of the TSB group, and patrons include Sir Yehudi Menuhin, Dame Margot Fonteyn and Sir Michael Tippett.

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overseas news

Clashes end in truce

Last week's disturbances at Athens Polytechnic, which led to the suspension of Greece's three most senior police officers, and the proffered resignations of two government ministers, marked a major change of direction in Greek student protests with an uneasy collaboration between the government and the students' union in calming the unrest.

The violent clashes between police and young demonstrators, and the subsequent occupation of the polytechnic by more than 1,000 students, followed the shooting of a 15-year-old youth by the police during the now-traditional November student demonstrations. The march commemorates the polytechnic students' revolt of 1973, which triggered the downfall of the military dictatorship, and, until now has always been strongly anti-American in tone, since it is widely felt among young people, the US government could have done more to condemn the rule of the colonels.

This year, however, the demonstrators' target seemed to be the socialist government of Mr Papandreu, and, in particular, the package of severe austerity measures which it introduced last month. These measures had already been sharply attacked both by the trade unions and by Papandreu's own left-wingers. They include devaluation of the drachma by 15 per cent, heavy import duties on non-essentials, a two-year wage freeze and major cuts in government spending.

The clashes surrounding the students' march on November 17 seem to have been initiated by a small group who broke away from the rear of the procession, and began stoning and fire-bombing shops, offices and buses. When a police bus was set alight, a policeman, Theodoros Melissas, fired and killed the 15-year-old schoolboy, Michaelis Kallitras. Melissas has since been charged with "involuntary manslaughter", and is believed to be basing his defence on the claim that he only fired into the air in self-defence.

Following the shooting, the Athens chemical faculty, and the polytechnic were occupied by protesters, while others, wearing masks and armed with staves, went on the rampage, attacking banks, shops and the offices of three daily newspapers. According to the police, these youths were "anarchists"; certainly, many of them later proved to be far too young to be university students.

Perhaps for this reason, on the day of Kallitras' funeral, the students' union, which had been planning a march to parliament to protest against police violence, decided at the last moment to cancel it.

Row over Tito book continues to simmer

The case of Veselin Djuretic, the Yugoslav historian whose book *Alles and the Yugoslav War Drama* presented the late Marshal Tito in a new, and not always complimentary light, continues to have repercussions. Djuretic himself was expelled from the Communist Party early in November. The two referees, Dr Savo Skoko and Dr Zoran Lukic, both well-known military historians, on whose recommendation the book was published, have been relieved of all posts in

Phone costs hamper Europe

from David Dickson

PARIS
Proposals currently being discussed throughout Europe for raising the costs of transmitting computerized data over privately leased telephone lines could place European university research workers at an even greater disadvantage to American scientists.

This is the claim being made by Paris-based officials of IBM (Europe), who have for the past three years been building up a computer-based system by which scientists in universities and other research institutions can communicate and exchange information, known as the European Academic Research Network.

After protracted negotiations, Britain decided two months ago to join the 14 other countries in the network, turning it into "the biggest of its kind in Europe" according to Mr Herb Budd, the company's director of scientific programmes.

However according to Mr Budd the future viability of the network, whose costs IBM has agreed to cover up to the end of 1987, is being threatened by the current and future policies of government-owned post and telecommunications authorities - usually referred to under the French initials of PTTs - which set the rates for transmitting data over telephone lines.

Universities are currently required to pay the same rates as commercial organizations (such as banks) for transmitting data along the inter-country lines. Rates can be up to six times as high as those paid to cover comparable distances in the US. And these rates could be increased by a factor of two or three if recommendations are accepted to impose a volume tariff on top of the current leasing charge.

"It is very frustrating to see the PTTs treat the universities in a commercial way, particularly since universities have no defences against this type of thing," says Mr Budd. "We have gone the other way and reduced the cost of computer-based communication."

EARN is based on an internal message system developed initially by the company for its own use. Getting it accepted by the different European countries has not been easy, partly because many have been wary of the computer giant's motives, suspecting a deliberate attempt to use it to help introduce IBM standards for all forms of public networking.

Faced with such criticism, the company has agreed that as from 1987 EARN will operate on the alternative OSI (Open Systems Interconnection) standards being developed by a range of

European computer manufacturers, with the backing of the EEC. But IBM officials maintain that they still face two formidable barriers in trying to get the network off the ground, barriers that the universities using the network will themselves face when the company withdraws its funding. The first is the high cost of leasing dedicated land-lines from public telecommunications agencies.

"Cross-border connections cost between two and five times as much as interstate connections in the US - indeed, the flat rate for a 500 kilometre line is about six times higher," says Mr Budd.

The second problem is persuading scientists of the value of this type of network. "Physicists have been the traditional leaders in this activity, since university scientists have had to communicate with major research facilities," says Mr Budd, pointing out that the central contact points for British scientists wanting to gain access to EARN is through the Rutherford Laboratory of the Science and Engineering Research Council.

In contrast, he claims that several other disciplines - in particular biologists - have been much slower than their colleagues in the US to make use of the potential offered by computer-based communication.



Setting sights and salaries

New salary scales for academic staff have recently been issued by the Higher Salaries Commission, a body which in New Zealand determines salaries for approximately 8,000 publicly funded posts, 3,300 of which are in universities.

The salary increases granted range from 13 per cent at the bottom of the assistant lecturer scale to 37 per cent at the professorial level. While the increases will have a slightly unrealistic air to our United Kingdom colleagues, it must be noted that our system of salary "negotiation" allows for general reviews at three yearly intervals only. Further, at this occasion there had been a four-year interval since the previous review as a result of the previous government's wage-price freeze.

Arising from this review, however, are a number of major concerns which the association is now confronting - the prime concern being the method of determining salaries. University academic staff in New Zealand are in a unique position as far as salary fixing goes, as we have no mechanism for direct negotiation with our employers. The Higher Salaries Commission determines academic salaries after having received recommendations from the University Grants Committee. Before making such recommendations, the UGC is required to consult with AUTNZ as well as with representatives of the vice chancellors' committee, the university councils and the State Services Commission.

On this occasion, however, the UGC did not in our opinion fulfil its statutory obligations. At the "negotiations", the AUTNZ submission was received, listened to and following our departure a final recommendation was made and communicated to us late in the evening before being forwarded to the Higher Salaries Commission the next morning.

The recommendations made by the UGC were totally unacceptable to us as they proposed ludicrously low increases for assistant lecturers and lecturers and represented overall a complete negation of the association's case for an academic salary scale with compressed vertical differentials. The AUTNZ was, therefore, forced to argue its case separately before the Higher Salaries Commission.

The next review of academic salaries is scheduled to take effect from April 1, 1987 a process which will be well under way by late 1986. The association has, however, received an assurance from the UGC that before this process begins again we will have discussions aimed at developing a negotiation procedure which is more acceptable.

This round, we suffered from having academic salaries reviewed by a body which assesses the salaries of top civil servants from a strictly hierarchical viewpoint. For the second time in a decade we have seen relativities widened to the extent that the maximum salary paid to a university lecturer in New Zealand is now only 45 per cent of the professional maximum.

The UGC itself acknowledged the validity of our case but was daunted by the implicit percentage increase involved. The resultant problems for junior staff will need to be confronted in the 1987 review.

Rob Crozier

The author is general secretary of the Association of University Teachers New Zealand.

School exams controversy

from Barbara von Ow

MUNICH
The West German *Länder* are embroiled in a controversy about whether school leaving exams other than the traditional *Abitur* can qualify students for higher education.

The dispute broke out after Bavarian culture minister Hans Maier announced earlier this month that Bavaria would no longer recognize school-leavers from one of the 22 so-called "college schools" in North Rhine-Westphalia. These schools, introduced under the coalition government in 1976, practice a reformed version of the traditional gymnasium education.

Instead of the set curriculum at the old gymnasiums, the college schools offer pupils a wider choice of subjects and specialization. The Conservative-governed *Länder* have remained critical of the new system.

Justifying his decision, Mr Maier said North Rhine-Westphalia had failed to submit a report on the college schools, as required by the culture ministers' conference. According to the minister's decision, the college system was an experiment that expired in July 1985. Whether the college school exams could be recognized beyond that date would depend on the findings of an official report.

Baden-Württemberg, also a Conservative-ruled *Land*, has followed Bavaria's decision. The other Conservative-ruled *Länder* have made clear they will follow suit if North Rhine-Westphalia, which is ruled by the Social Democrats, does not agree a compromise.

The Conservative *Länder* are backed by the Philologists' Association and the Professors' Association. The latter recently published a study amongst its 11,500 members which revealed that all university disciplines, whether arts, natural sciences or engineering, required that student beginners had a solid general knowledge.



Lover's leap into trouble

from Geoff Maslem

MELBOURNE
Look before you leap, it may be sexual harassment. That is a newly-coined proverb at the University of Melbourne following the amorous but unsuccessful advances of one student.

The student threatened to jump off a bridge when a faculty secretary refused to go out with him. The distressed secretary told a university counsellor, only to learn that under a new university policy, the student could be guilty of sexually harassing her.

Similarly, lecturers who used the threat of examination or essay marks to place sexual pressure on students or who repeatedly use language in lectures offensive to female students could find themselves the subject of complaints to the vice chancellor.

The university council at a meeting last month decided to initiate a campaign to educate staff about sexual harassment and to adopt a policy intended to eliminate the problem.

According to the policy, sexual harassment extends from unwelcome actions such as gestures, displays of offensive pictures, comments of a sexual nature, implicit demands for sexual activities, to physical contact such as patting, pinching and actual molestation.

The university has nominated advisers who will be available for people who wish to discuss instances of possible harassment. The advisers, at least one female and one male, will be senior members of staff trained in counselling and "conciliation" techniques.

The Melbourne student who used a bridge as a threat got nowhere except some anonymous notoriety. And nobody can think of a bridge to jump off in Melbourne high enough off the ground to cause any damage.

Kasparov, eat your heart out, says chess computer buff

from William Norris

WASHINGTON
An American computer which has just achieved chess master status now has its sights set on the world chess championship. The computer, known as Hitech, is the creation of Dr Hans Berliner, a computer science professor at Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh. It achieved its new ranking by beating two human masters in an American tournament and drawing with a third.

Hitech is capable of analysing 175,000 moves per second, which is

claimed to be 50 per cent faster than any other chess-playing machine. At the North American Computer Chess Championship in Denver this year it whipped every other computer in sight.

"It's both smart and fast. It's very, very strong in tactics and the ability to calculate sequences," says Dr Berliner, who is himself a chess master. "What sets it apart from other computers is that we're able to evaluate a position with a high degree of sophistication very, very quickly."

Hitech took three years to construct and won the first tournament it entered on May 25. By mid-October its record was 19 wins, three draws and three defeats - but the last were in the early days when it was new to competition.

The new master is actually a series of parallel computers, with a microchip for each of the 64 squares on the chess board. Each one identifies every move and a central arbiter judges moves to be made and selects the best. A move is judged on whether it captures a piece in jeopardy, puts a friendly piece in jeopardy, or improves the control of the board.

At most, a human player considers about 200 possible chess moves, based on experience and intuition. Hitech does rather better - looking at 30,000,000 positions in about three minutes.

Dr Berliner forecasts that within 10 years a refinement of Hitech could be competitive with world champion Garry Kasparov. In consequence Dr Berliner, who left IBM 16 years ago to get his own start, is now working on the marriage of artificial intelligence and chess. It is a little disenchanted by your own machine.

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from William Norris

WASHINGTON

Some of the 2,300 university scientists in the United States who have signed pledges vowing to have no part of President Reagan's "star wars" programme are finding, to their fury, that they may be working for it anyway.

A Pentagon spokesman admitted this week that research contracts with other military agencies, such as the Office of Naval Research, are in fact being funded by the Strategic Defense Initiative organization, without the knowledge of the scientists concerned.

The switch in funding sources came to light at Princeton University, where the director of the office of research and project administration solicited one day that a proposal sent to the National Science Foundation and the Office of Naval Research had been awarded \$280,000 by the star wars programme. The information was

Opponents fooled into 'star wars' research

contained in an easily-overlooked number in one corner of the contract, and was noticed only by chance.

"I sign all the contracts that come through for the university, and on a busy day I might not have seen that number on the corner," said the director, Allen Shinsgall. "All of us would have been much more pleased if they had designated it SDI money from the beginning."

At Princeton, some 75 per cent of the physics department have signed a petition refusing to accept star wars support.

The contracts department at the California Institute of Technology, where 60 per cent of physicists are opposed to the project, seems to have been less observant. The SDI organization claims that it gave \$300,000 to their department this year, and the scientists are now trying to find out which of their projects it was spent on. Boston College found that the third year of a research contract with the Air Force had been switched to SDI funding without their knowledge, and only learned of it when questions from students and reporters were sparked by

an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

At the Pentagon, however, there was a studied refusal to see what all the fuss was about. Since the SDI organization was founded two years ago, a spokesman said, it had inherited a lot of the contracts awarded to universities by other military agencies.

The terms of the contracts themselves had not changed, and it had therefore seemed unnecessary to inform the scientists that they were now working for star wars. "Why should we?" the spokesman asked.

Not all the scientists involved in the funding switch have objected. But one of the organizers of the anti-star wars petition, Professor John Kogut of the University of Illinois, is unhappy. "This is potentially a contentious issue," he said. "I don't know if they are trying to pull the wool over people's eyes or not."

Malay open university to resolve jobs crisis

by Geoffrey Parkins

Professor Ungku Aziz, head of a special committee set up by the government to study all aspects of establishing an open university in Malaysia, has said that the institution's primary purpose would be to help meet the need for manpower by providing courses in marketable specialties for around 80,000 students.

Professor Aziz, who is also vice chancellor of the University of Malaysia and a staunch supporter of the open university idea, added that by drawing on the expertise of about 3,000 academics from the country's leading universities, it would require only two years to create and provide student places equivalent to four or five large universities at a fraction of the cost.

Further and higher education, says Professor Aziz, should be the "right of every Malaysian citizen" and while education minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has affirmed the government's intention of greatly expanding colleges and universities under the fifth Malaysia plan, it is only by establishing an open university offering a broad range of distance-learning courses that such a "right can be made available to all who desire it, irrespective of racial or economic status".

Education for its own sake or simply churning out large numbers of paper qualified graduates, the professor said, was not, however, what he had in mind. While recognizing the hidden benefits of education, like creating a more "intelligent" and "thoughtful" society and keeping teenagers from over-indulging themselves in mindless pop culture, rapid industrialization meant that a much larger number of Malaysians required a higher level of technical and vocational education that would make them more "practical and innovative" in the future.

Professor Aziz's vision of a Malaysian OU is of a distance-teaching institution that would offer courses ranging from SPM (O level) to university degree level.

This year the Malaysian government was woken up to the fact that it is well short of the number of appropriately trained personnel it requires to achieve its industrialization programme. Recent surveys show the percentage of skilled workers in the population is little over 30 per 10,000, which is low in comparison with most developing nations. Singapore had 35, and Mexico 43 per 10,000 as long ago as 1970. And a recent World Bank study estimated that Malaysia would need to train around 200,000 specialist personnel by 1990.

The Malaysian government's decision to set up the special OU committee comes after making a lengthy study of the open universities of other countries, which included sending its own educationalists to Britain, Canada, Australia, Indonesia, Thailand and elsewhere, to find out how it's done. The British and Thai models received most attention, but sources say the Thai model is favoured because it is less expensive and has been successful in operating in an Asian environment.



Dr Abdel Salam Majali, president of the University of Jordan, helps Prince Philip don his gown

Prince Philip's PhD awarded at Buckingham Palace

by John O'Leary

A unique ceremony took place last week at Buckingham Palace when the Duke of Edinburgh received an honorary degree from the University of Jordan.

Prince Philip is only the second honorary graduate of the university, the first being King Hussein. He received his PhD from the university president, Dr Abdel Salam Majali, in recognition of his interest in education, youth and environmental protection. Prince Philip visited the university in March.

Dr Majali was in Britain visiting universities at the invitation of the British Council. During his visit, he signed a wide-ranging agreement with Glasgow University, allowing for the exchange of staff, the establishment of split PhD programmes and further assistance in building up Jordanian postgraduate degrees.

The university, which has 11,500 students, offers a variety of master's degrees but awards PhDs only in Arabic. With Glasgow's help, five or six new subjects will be added in the next year. It is estimated that 150,000 per cent of its income.

Research bar criticized

A warning that recent attempts by the Reagan administration to bar foreign researchers from working on supercomputers could severely hamper the quality of academic work, has been issued by an American scientist.

Robert Park, professor of physics at the University of Maryland, said last week that the president's latest attempt to "intervene" in university research work would be "harmful to the quality of academic research and threaten the nation's technological leadership".

Professor Park, who was speaking at a meeting of the American Association of University Professors in Washington DC, said that universities and academic research centres must be free to select faculty, set curricula, and admit students and researchers.

The security zealots, Dr Park said, were arguing that those who used the new machines might help hostile nations to build their own. "This has been compared to learning how to build a television set from watching *Dallas*."

Student organizations battle for survival

from Bernard Kennedy

ANKARA
Turkey's new student associations - the first form of student organization of any kind since the military takeover in 1980 - are having a hard time getting off the ground. Yet even their existence is an achievement in view of the opposition from university authorities.

Students at Ankara University law faculty had to take the rectorate to court in order to ensure the survival of their association. The governor of Ankara province had turned down their application for recognition of the association on the grounds that it didn't have the approval of the university rector. But a civil court then ruled that the 1981 Higher Education (Council) Act - one of the many strict laws instigated by the military before they returned the country to civilian rule - did not give university rectors the right to veto student associations. The associations' founders describe their aims as firstly to try and solve

some of the problems of students, which range from prices in university canteens to the high number of undergraduates being sent down for academic failure, and secondly to bring about democratization on campus. But the deputy dean of the law faculty was reported as saying that "Nobody ever proposed that patients should be involved in the administration of hospitals."

Another problem faced by the nascent associations is persuading students to overcome their fear of the administration. The law faculty association had trouble finding seven founder members for this reason. And the temporary detention of four security men for failing to stop an unauthorized political meeting when parliamentarians Cuncyi Canver and Fikri Saglar visited Ankara's Middle East Technical University to talk to student leaders would seem to justify students' apprehensions.

Courses

International Specialist Seminar

Financial and resource management in higher education

6-18 July 1986 in Bath

The seminar will examine the practices, management and techniques of resources allocation and income generation to and within universities. The central theme will be finance but importance will be given to personnel, space and student enrolment techniques as influenced by finance.

The Director of Studies for the seminar will be Mr Richard Mawdlitt, Secretary and Registrar of the University of Bath. The Deputy Director will be Mr Ian Trickett, University Accountant of the University of Bath.

The seminar is designed for senior academic and administrative staff in universities and other institutions of higher education. The seminar should be of particular interest to vice-chancellors, deans, heads of departments, registrars, bursars, finance officers and other staff with responsibility for resource management. Higher education planners in central or regional government may also find it of interest.

There are vacancies for 40 participants

Fee £695. This is a residential seminar.

Venue and accommodation
The sessions will be based at the University of Bath. Participants will be accommodated at Wessex House on the university campus.

Further information and application forms are available from British Council Representatives overseas or from Courses Department, The British Council, 85 Davies Street, London W1Y 2AA.

The British Council

Brixton's solid foundation for rebuilding hope

Maggie Richards reports on the radical transformation of adult education in Brixton since the first riots there, four years ago.

As vice principal at an adult education institute in Brixton, Patrick Burger can well recall the aftermath of the initial rioting in the area four years ago. "The rioting took place at the weekend. On the Monday I attended a meeting at County Hall - someone had pushed the panic button - and education, as so often happens, was being seen as the panacea.

"There was a lot of discussion about what could be provided in Brixton, eventually I said: 'Look, if all we are offering black teenagers is a choice between jumping about in a gym and overturning cars and setting them alight, it is easy to see which option they will choose.'

The first spate of rioting produced a shockwave, both within the local community, and among those responsible for its education services.

By way of contrast, this autumn's disturbances provoked little response, either directly in the locality or at local authority level.

Says Patrick Burger: "On the first occasion our student numbers dropped dramatically: people were shaken and frightened to leave their homes. This time there has been no drop in student numbers, and no emergency meetings at County Hall."

Brixton's adult education provision has altered dramatically in the interlude between the initial riots and the outbreak of this September. But the institute's principal, Mr Louis Stott, points out that change was imminent anyway - a reorganization plan had been implemented in January 1981.

Four years on, the days when the institute's membership was comprised almost exclusively of a white, privileged, well-educated elite are now just a memory.

The interim has seen an enormous



An adult education woodwork class at the Strand Centre in Brixton (above): more blacks than ever before are joining. Inset, black and white youngsters join forces for a youth centre musical production

leap in black enrolment, and a substantial rise in the number of black staff employed. As their numbers have swelled, so the composition of the curriculum has altered, reflecting the institute's new multi-racial clientele in such areas as Afro-Caribbean studies and ethnic cookery classes.

Mr Stott does not bemoan the loss of his original students: "Adult education, even in the most prosperous times, only ever attracts about four per cent of the population nationally. In London we attract around 10 per cent. But it is a changing 10 per cent. The actual figure does not concern us. Over a period of 10 years the student population may change completely. So we are teaching a far greater proportion of the population in real terms."

As far as possible he feels adult education in Brixton should reflect the make up of the community it serves: "More black people are involved in our classes now for one simple reason - because they want to come along."

But progress towards creating a multi-ethnic service has been painstakingly slow and sometimes frustrated by red tape.

In the wake of the first bout of rioting the institute arranged meetings with community groups to discuss what could be done. More groups were encouraged to use educational premises, regardless of whether or not their interests were strictly educational.

In one instance a small group of Asian women met at a centre to make toys. Then, aided by tuition in business practice, they progressed to the creation of a commercial enterprise.

But some worthwhile projects have been abandoned or deferred until a suitable tutor can be found. The formation of a local history group, suggested during early discussions with community organizations, faltered because a tutor with sufficient local knowledge could not be found. Recently the issue surfaced again, and a tutor came forward with relevant expertise.

"We are enormously dependent on finding the right tutor at the right time to meet demand," said Mr Stott. Adult educators in Brixton are also keenly aware that the community groups and students may not instantly

be able to identify their own needs.

"It is often better for us to respond to demand, then try to identify needs afterwards. If demand is there and its development is encouraged, then the needs emerge later," explained Patrick Burger.

In attempting to take on new and unexplored territory in the curriculum, the institute has, in some circumstances, had to use unorthodox means to employ suitable tutors.

Israel Kemp Fit, physical education with religious connotations for Rastafarians, has proved extremely popular and now attracts both black and white students. But the institute encountered difficulty in employing the tutor for the course because he lacked the necessary qualifications.

The introduction of black teaching staff has greatly helped in encouraging black students to enrol for classes. Four years ago the institute staff included two black people, now there are almost 20 full-time and part-time teaching staff, plus black administrative workers.

Achieving the right balance, however, is not easy. The institute is aware

that an all-black staff at a particular centre might result in a black student population.

Among the institute's present black staff is Beryl Thomas. She began her career based in Lambeth, but moved to Brixton when the area was designated a core area for the NAB's work.

She feels black education is poised on the brink of a new era: "We went through a period of being black and proud of it, and on to studies of Afro-Caribbean history and culture, which gave us a separate identity from other black people."

"I feel it is now time to take this stage further and ask what it is that divides people from different areas of the Caribbean. We ought to be discussing shared areas of interest and our common background. We have grown up hating one another for things which in fact we have in common."

"There are black people we are not reaching and yet if they know what we had to offer I am sure they would want to take it up. Community education has failed them."

"Maybe a different kind of community outreach worker is needed now - less intellectual, more street-wise, yet still concerned with education. I feel I cannot approach certain people in Brixton because of the way I speak. On the other hand, I am pleased at the changes which have taken place over the last four years. In particular the attitude of the staff - they are more responsive, more mellow."

While new efforts may be needed to tackle the adult black sub-culture in Brixton, the area's youth service is striving to bridge the post-school gap. It is a crucial hole in the jobless, adolescent life, as Lambeth's senior youth officer Randal Davies is acutely aware.

Many young blacks, he says, drop out of society completely for six to nine months after leaving school, abandoning themselves to the novelty of a routine-free existence.

When the novelty wears off they are inclined to turn first to the youth centre for help. The major task then is to build lost confidence and restore self-esteem. Says Mr Davies: "These are people who feel they are losers in an alien culture, they have no historic background, no place in the society in which they live."

Increasingly, the youth service is attempting to demonstrate to young black people that Afro-Caribbean history and culture is as valid as the white British culture in which they have been schooled.

"Lambeth is now looking to the re-writing of its social education curriculum. We are trying to do it now, do it quickly and get it right."

"Our work must be based on a social education framework, an orientation to life skills, rather than non-vocational skills and recreational activities."

The style of our youth centres is veering towards making them contact points between adults and young people, and away from being sites where classes and activities take place.

"We are moving towards saying to educators - we are interested in your ability to teach these skills, but we are more deeply concerned with your ability to communicate with young people."

What do you do when a whole subject area faces the loss of one fifth of its students in a single year? Unless the Government softens its attitude towards higher education, it is a question which will have to be answered several times over next year, when the National Advisory Body gets down to its planning for 1987/88.

There was a suspicion of bluff when the NAB first warned of the need for 20 per cent cuts in the humanities and other non-vocational areas. The economies demanded were on such a scale that many assumed the policy to be designed merely to shock ministers into concessions. Following hard on the heels of previous cuts in the same subjects, the result could only be wholesale closures and the decimation of some disciplines.

Now, however, the prospect does not seem so far-fetched. With the NAB's £15 million short of the budget it needs to preserve existing funding levels, officials have been told to begin detailed planning for 1987/88 on the assumption that cuts of even more than 20 per cent will have to be imposed. The decision to place access before resources again in 1986/87 has caused some controversy that public assurances are being demanded already to commit the NAB not to repeat the process in 12 months' time.

If it is a bluff, no one has told the NAB's art and design group. It has produced a report making a series of proposals for coping with cuts of 20 per cent, which would result in the biggest shake-up in art education for 25 years.

The deadline for responses passed on Monday and it is clear that the report has caused a furore in the art colleges.

It deals primarily with fine art, which, together with a number of specialized subjects such as ceramics and jewellery, has been left in an even more exposed position by the NAB's decision to separate art and design for planning purposes. Design has become a protected discipline, guaranteeing it stable intakes and funding to match, making the smaller fine art area particularly vulnerable.

The implicit assumption is that design is vocational while art is a different discipline, not directly related to industry and commerce.

The separation is bitterly opposed in

No one denies that the result is bad news

article circles, both because of its inevitable effect on fine art departments and on academic grounds. Two members of the NAB's art and design group resigned over the issue, although the remainder accepted the move "to reflect a balance between considerations of academic coherence, manageability of data handling and planning, relative costs of different subjects, and national and international classifications."

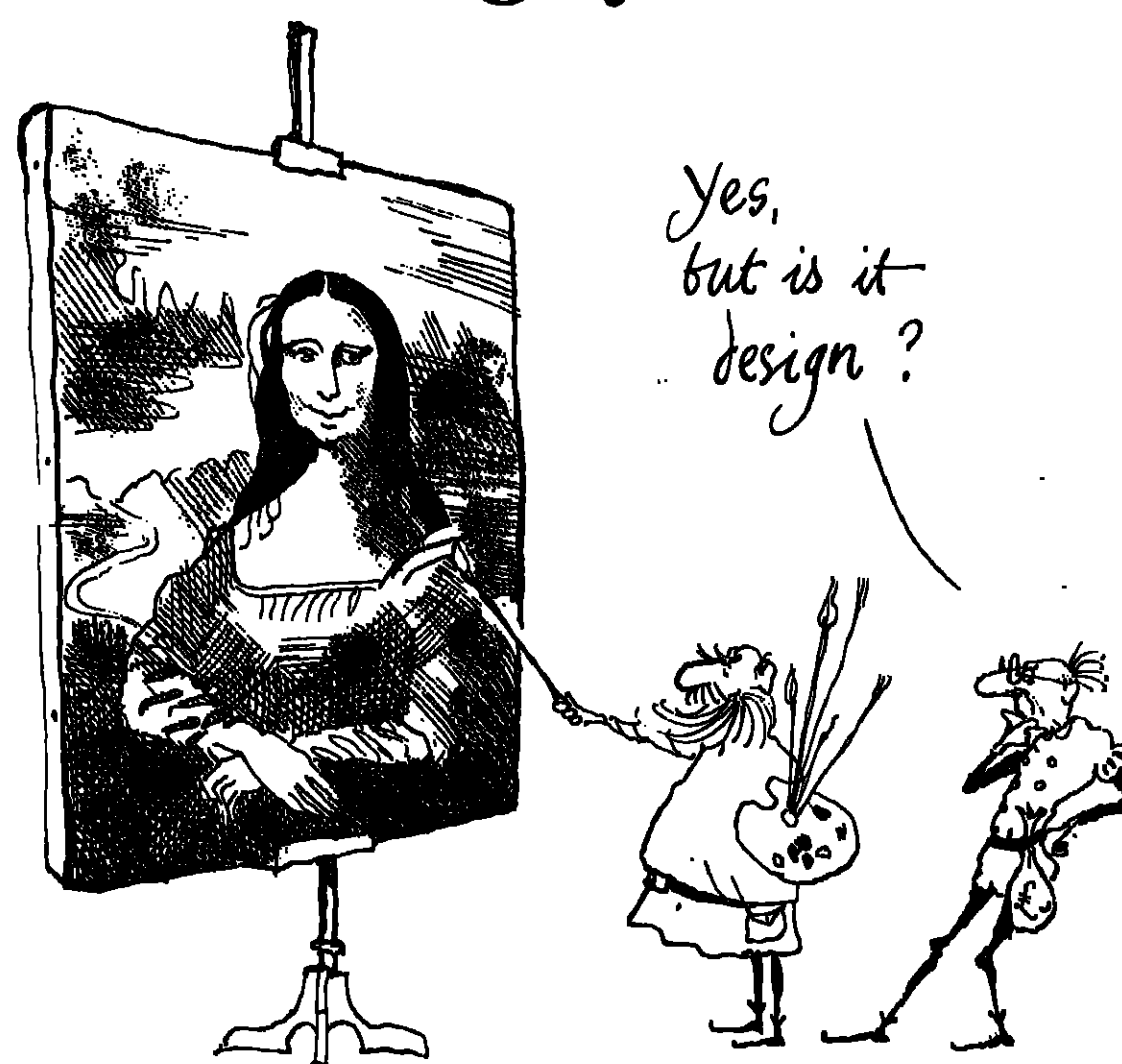
Whatever the merits of the decision, no one denies that the result is bad news for the subjects left in the art category, as well as for the performing arts, which have been hived off into another unprotected programme.

No doubt there are holes still to be fought within the NAB about the desirability of going further at this stage with the switching of resources into science; very probably there will be moves made to lessen the contrast in the treatment of protected and unprotected subjects. But, unless the policy is altered in an unexpectedly radical way, art is in line for substantial cuts.

The art and design group, which is one of the NAB's longest established (although it has had a change of chairman and of some members along the way), could have devoted its energies to a campaign to get other subjects into the safety net with design. That is certainly what many people in the art colleges and polytechnic art departments think it should be doing, and the group would not admit to giving up that cause. But the political judgement was made long ago that the NAB was unlikely to take such a course and contingencies had to be made according to the worst scenario.

Despite accusations of defeatism and selling out the art sector, the group decided months ago to grasp the nettle in a way that no other has done and to look fundamentally at the structure and content of fine art education. The outcome of the review will have clear implications for the small, specialist subjects and for the smattering of general courses which come under the art umbrella. But, since nine-tenths of

Colouring by numbers



The NAB's funding distinction between art and design has provoked a bitter response. John O'Leary reports

the 6,000 students in the relevant NAB programme are on fine art, that is where the centre of attention has to be.

Although the last NAB planning exercise saw some reduction in the number of fine art students, the size and character of the remaining provision has attracted comment previously. One of the Leverhulme inquiry seminars was devoted to the arts and there it was agreed that the number of fine art courses was out of balance with that for design and might have to be reduced.

The NAB group, two of whose members attended the Leverhulme seminar, began its report from the premise that some closures were inevitable, given the likely level of cuts, but felt that they could be minimized as a side-effect of its preferred strategy.

The options for coping with a 20 per cent cut were listed in the report as: ● the withdrawal of all advanced courses from a number of colleges or departments whose provision is mainly in the art programme area; ● the withdrawal of all courses in the art programme alone in a larger number of institutions;

● the withdrawal of some courses in even larger range of colleges; ● a reduction of 20 per cent in the intakes of all art courses; ● a selective approach, cutting numbers by 20 per cent in total.

However, rather than adopt any of these, the group has plumped for a restructuring of courses with, as its lynchpin, the shortening of the majority of fine art courses from three years to two. The honours degree course would cease to be the main vehicle for higher education and, instead, a broad general course would provide a grounding for some to go on to a third year of specialization. In short, a revolution.

The educational case for such drastic measures is made in terms of the need for higher education to equip the graduate for life in a modern society, as well as providing for personal fulfilment. An education in the visual arts, according to the report, is valued more for meeting personal and social needs than as direct vocational or professional preparation. But it has benefits for employers in stimulating innovative thinking.

"The challenge for providers is to ensure that higher education in art caters adequately and realistically for personal and social needs and complicitimes to enrich approaches to material problems," the report says. "It is not evident that the present pattern of

provision is meeting this challenge."

Like the Leverhulme seminar, the group found fine art courses to be too directly orientated towards professional practice - a vocation which only the lucky few can make pay. Honours courses in fine art were said to be broadly similar in the experiences they offered students, inculcating attitudes associated with professional artists.

In short, the general educational role has been almost entirely usurped by the preoccupation with professional practice," says the report. "Not only that but in the content, staffing policies, teaching methods and assessment procedures of the courses the ethos is of a particular kind of professional practice, the self-standing artist achieving success by exposure in commercial or public galleries."

While design courses are tailored to employment needs and their students are prepared for particular industrial or entrepreneurial areas, fine art graduates are left with few jobs demanding their skills and attitudes. Teaching posts are fewer, traditional

Professional links help to keep standards high

sources of patronage have practically disappeared and only a few of the most talented and determined will make a living from the production of their art.

It is a picture which is strenuously denied in the art colleges and fine art departments, which claim to have done much in recent years to make their courses more marketable. Close links with professional practice help to keep standards high, they say, while students are given conceptual, critical and analytical skills which are just what is needed in a constantly changing world of work.

There is agreement on all sides that few fine art graduates support themselves through professional practice. Many work as craftsmen or designers, or in other creative fields. The department sees this as evidence of demand for their students, but the group believes that fine art graduates would be better off with courses which gave them more transferable skills.

"If students are to be given the full advantage of high level education in art and through the visual arts they should not be preoccupied with a narrow, and

for the most part unrealistic, vocationalism," the report says. "A broader experience in most courses, some of them perhaps fusing art with design or other studies, would surely enable many more students at this level to enter diverse areas of professional life with confidence and respect."

The thrust of the report is that courses throughout the art programme need to be broadened. In addition to the specialist fine art degree, the group foresees new courses appropriate for those hoping to make a living from arts and crafts and more general courses for those seeking a broad understanding of the visual and applied arts. Some provision would be at sub-degree level and non-specialist. A range of course would replace the existing concentration on the honours degree, widening the choice for intending students.

Breadth would be ensured by insisting on more concern for a variety of elements, including:

- a study of the nature of visual perception;
- an appreciation of the role of art in society;
- the acquisition of a number of creative skills, including drawing and making;
- an historical understanding of the development of art concepts and ideas;
- the development of individual practice and the relevant technical competence within a broad study of the visual and applied arts.

The new system would include sub-degree diplomas in art for the first time. Two-year full-time (or three part-time) courses might be attractive to mature students and art and design would also be incorporated into multi-disciplinary diplomas.

Many existing degrees would be replaced by less specialist courses, sometimes amalgamating craft-oriented, general design and fine art programmes. Opportunities for part-time students would be enhanced and the number of general degrees offered without honours increased. This, together with the proposal that the first two years of the new degrees should lead to a diploma, which would be the terminal qualification for the majority of students, is the most controversial element of the report.

Although the group believes it would prevent the closure of a number of departments as well as satisfying an educational need, the National Association for Fine Art Education disavows it as an economic expedient which is neither feasible nor desirable educationally.

Fine art in the public sector (1983/84)		
Fine art degree students	5,027	
Total public sector numbers	210,164	
Proportion of fine art	2.39 per cent	
Fine art and design		
Fine art and design degree/BTEC diplomas	19,300	
Total public sector students	210,164	
Proportion of fine art and design	9.18 per cent	
Balance of fine art and design		
Fine art (1984/85 first-year intakes)	1,727	
Design (1984/85 first-year intakes)	8,689	
Proportion of fine art	25.9 per cent	
Balance of courses		
Fine art degrees (university and public sector)	48	
Design degree	154	
Design other advanced courses	484	

The association, which has members from universities, polytechnics and colleges, said in its response to the report: "The concept of 'Generalized Art' is anathema. You cannot generalize away a specialism. The opposite of specialization in art is not generalization, it is no specialization. Economic factors are confusing educational considerations, the NAFAE believes, and a two-year basic qualification would be a retrograde step."

The NAB group is not specific about the number of specialist degree courses which might remain, but it does not pretend that it would be anything but limited. Some compensation is offered in the form of new postgraduate courses, although these would be expected to go to the institutions chosen to continue specialist degrees.

Four criteria are suggested for selecting which institutions those would be. There would be geographical considerations; high level work would normally be located alongside similar provision in related disciplines; links would be retained with postgraduate study; and courses of exceptionally high quality might be retained even if the other criteria were not fulfilled.

With only four institutions offering fine art in the university sector, the effect of the report's proposals would be to change the face of art education. Inevitably, two classes of department would result, according to which were allowed to keep specialist provision, and the continued attractiveness of fine art would be in doubt. Even Dr David Bethel, director of Leicester Polytechnic and a member of the group, concedes that the two-year diploma probably would not be popular, although he would welcome the increases in recruitment to design courses which might result.

The response offers no clear alternative

The NAFAE, like many of those responding to the report, offers no clear alternative, calling instead for a moratorium on cuts and restructuring while research is carried out to test the assumptions of the group. The association accuses the group of producing a prejudicial account of the aims, nature and scale of fine art education, unsupported by any evidence. Performance art, photographic processes, film, video and information technology are offered as examples of areas of study added to painting, drawing and sculpture as part of the development of fine art courses.

The association insists that there is no over-provision of fine art, pointing out that no new courses have been approved in England and Wales for 11 years and that fewer than half last year's applicants were accepted. Two conferences have discussed the report and have opposed not only the changes proposed but also the closure of any courses.

Such uncompromising opposition is typical of the reaction throughout art education and, with the Department of Education and Science less than enthusiastic about two-year qualifications, the chances of the report's recommendations being implemented must be slim. But the debate will be an interesting pointer for those outside the art world to the way in which the NAB will approach its new planning exercise. Whether or not the sweeping changes advocated by the group are accepted, the debate will demonstrate the practicalities of trying to implement a cut of such magnitude. What began as a private argument will be seen as a dry run for the biggest test yet faced by the NAB.

Researchers back on the front line

After the riots come the researchers. The phenomenon has become a familiar, if somewhat tiresome, feature of life in post-disturbance Brixton.

So when Brenda Bryan and her colleague Mahantashan Mahalingam launched a project to ascertain Afro-Caribbean attitudes to adult education they fully expected a backlash.

Instead the response, in all but a few instances, was overwhelmingly enthusiastic. One reason may be that Brenda Bryan is black, lives in the area, and is well known in the community through her work in educational counselling.

But the researchers believe the warmth of the reaction was largely because black people in Brixton felt they were being invited to assist in determining their own needs, rather than accept the provision doled out by the predominantly white society around them. Most were eager to express opinions, and were reluctant to be fobbed off with brief answers to a questionnaire.

The project, directed from the Open College of South London and sponsored by the Further Education Unit, produced several surprising results, vindicating to some extent the views of some blacks in Brixton who feel whites have been making wrong assumptions about their needs.

The message delivered to the research workers was that Afro-Caribbean people yearn for academic qualifications, which carry status and may better equip them to find employment, and are dismissive of the leisure provision and training programmes currently on offer.

Against the backdrop of Brixton, leisure-oriented courses are viewed as diversionary luxuries; skills training is looked upon as second best, according to the report.

The finding has already gained some support from within the Open College, where Maggie Woodrow, the project consultant, recalls an open evening to publicize a new access course at Vauxhall College. On two successive evenings more than 100 people attempted to squeeze into the classroom where enrolments were taking place.

But while black people are demanding more courses leading to academic qualifications, the researchers also unearthed resentment about the form these courses take. There is a suspicion that recent provision, especially on the access sphere, has been too closely linked with providing people with the necessary ethnic backgrounds to become social workers and teachers, equipping them solely to deal with the area's problems.

The issue is already being tackled on a small scale, with the introduction of access courses in new areas, such as electrical engineering and food studies. The Inner London Education Authority too has emphasized the importance of a wider range of courses, particularly in science and technology.

Some participants in the survey expressed reservations about the style of teaching in adult and further education institutions. There was an indication that some black people viewed present teaching methods as too relaxed, and would prefer a more formal approach.

"Such comments could indicate a reaction against a lack of discipline in an earlier educational experience, or a preference among members of the Afro-Caribbean community for traditional methods of education, as opposed to the participatory approach which is perhaps more likely to be encountered in the post-school sector," says the report.

"This response, together with that on leisure-oriented provision reveals an unusually serious approach to post-school education - it is neither play, nor for 'playing around'."

The attitude of black people to teaching methods in an area the Open College is keen to explore in the future. Eventually it hopes to launch a research project - but the timing will depend upon obtaining the necessary resources.

Lack of sufficient resources may also hamper development in an area identified as one of the major barriers to greater participation by blacks. Many identified lack of awareness of what is on

offer in the locality as a stumbling block, combined with a belief that courses are irrelevant to their needs or inaccessible without suitable qualifications.

The survey also uncovered some doubts about the value of courses deliberately pitched at ethnic minorities. Asked about Afro-Caribbean studies, many black people thought they would be more worthwhile if they were aimed at white students in a bid to correct stereotyped images. Incorporation of such studies into courses across the curriculum might also assist, it was suggested.

Courses designed to create more opportunities for black people met with a positive response - with the proviso that such studies were not reserved exclusively for Afro-Caribbean students. There was particular concern about access courses, and criticism of the description by the Department of Education and Science of such provision as "specialist", and the attendant connection with remedial education.

In their recommendations for immediate action the researchers suggest more flexibility in enrolment procedures; the use of less conventional marketing techniques to attract more members of the Afro-Caribbean community; and a clear indication that formal qualifications are not required.

The researchers are also keen to see the establishment of pre-access courses, especially at adult education centres in Brixton. Such courses would seek, through developing links with individual community groups, to offer informal, introductory sessions and to identify needs emerging at grassroots.

Copies of the report and its recommendations are being distributed to all member institutions within the South London open college for discussion at college and adult education centre level.

Afro-Caribbean Perspectives on Education for Adults in South London, available from The Open College of South London, 58 Clapham Common Northside, London SW4 9RZ.

David Jobbins attends the inauguration of the Aga Khan University in Karachi

Incredibly for a country with its massive health problems, Pakistan is said to have too many doctors. There is one qualified doctor for about every 650 of population, a figure almost exactly equal to the United States or Canada.

And there is a growing problem with doctor unemployment, despite the crying medical needs of one of the world's poorest nations. Each year the country's 17 medical schools produce about 4,000 graduates, many of them destined for un or under-employment and few of them bound for the communities where they are most sorely needed — the underprivileged inner cities and the rural areas.

Yet in many parts of the country, infectious diseases are rife, infant mortality is massive, and life expectancy low compared with the affluent West. Whole areas of the country are served by only the most rudimentary health service while thousands of the country's inhabitants are forced by poverty to think twice before they seek proper medical advice.

Pakistan's problem is not so much its over-production of doctors but that they all concentrate in the urban areas where earnings through private practice are greatest and the established jobs most readily available.

Also earlier this year there was violence in two cities when the government imposed an extra tax on medical school graduates in an attempt to match the supply of doctors to jobs. The doctors said they had met all the state's requirements — the government said "Too bad" and put down the protests with force normally reserved for Pakistan's more unruly elements.

It is into this atmosphere that the Aga Khan's gift of a new university, composed in the first instance of a medical college and nursing school, has to be seen.

The project is the largest single initiative ever staged by the Geneva-based Aga Khan Foundation, which contributed an estimated \$300 million. Attached to the medical school is a teaching hospital which will eventually add its 724 beds to the capacity available in Karachi.

And, its planners hope, it will offer a distinctive medical training which will at least in part help to offset the imbalance between Pakistan's richer urban areas and its underprivileged squatter communities and remote rural villages.

The Aga Khan, speaking at the university's inauguration last month, pointed to Pakistan's emphasis on training doctors for Western-style tertiary care in the cities. This would not cease to be needed, but, with 80 per cent of its population based in the countryside, another road had to be devised, he said.

Practical field training in the small rural and urban health centres, who in turn would send their own paramedics to the university hospital for further training, would help tackle two of the third world's most intractable health problems, he said. First the preparation of urban-trained medical staff for rural work, and second, perhaps most importantly, how to build stable and satisfying careers in rural areas.

A confidential government report last year identified the reluctance of Pakistani-trained doctors to move to the more backward parts of the country as a major defect in its health care. But the government's laissez-faire attitude to health issues means that corrective steps are left either to the forces of the market or to grand philanthropic gestures.

The strikingly modern Aga Khan University can be seen as just such a gesture — the country's first private university established with the full encouragement of the government.



The Aga Khan campus... a mixture of Muslim tradition and modern technology.

Community health project

Built on 84 acres of land, and combining the elegance of traditional Muslim architecture and materials with modern technology, it will produce its first crop of 45 graduates in 1988. Of these, the medical college will be satisfied if barely a fifth work in the remote rural areas or underprivileged city slums for which its specially designed medical education will equip them.

What marks out the training at the Aga Khan University, apart from the sophisticated surroundings in which it takes place, is the heavy emphasis on community health.

A full year of the five-year course is devoted to community health science, with a heavy commitment to practical work in the field, either in the remote rural northern areas or in the city squatter settlements. This experience runs alongside the conventional academic programme throughout the course.

And it is what makes the training offered at the medical college unique, certainly in Pakistan. It has two declared goals — to train students for leadership roles in bringing effective health care to the underprivileged and to devise health care systems at community level with full student involvement.

Head of the community health science department is Dr John Bryant, an American with extensive experience of third world health problems in Thailand. The associate dean of the medical college, Professor Cameron Vellani, says: "The community health programme provides the contact with the community which enables a whole range of questions to be asked and answers collated. The idea is to have a rapport with the community so that people feel the benefit of the association with the university."

The communities involved, at least in the early stages, have been chosen with care. Although in their different ways they present tough problems, the locations have been deliberately chosen to generate enough tangible results to stop the students becoming discouraged and the community leaders from frustrated.

One community they decided not to tackle in the first year at least was Dhiti, a fishing community on an island off Karachi with appalling health problems. There is no water supply, sewage is discharged above the low tide line, and it is accessible only by boat or swimming.

Dr Bryant says: "We decided not to go there this year. We think we must not go to these communities just to study them and use them as a teaching

resource. We think this is unethical. "We want to start using just a little straight away. But the needs in Dhiti are very deep and intense. We might not be able to come through in a way which would be in keeping with the trust we are trying to build."

But the areas where students will spend their time working on community projects present their own formidable problems. Of the fifth of their course spent on community assignments, three-quarters will be spent in the field.

They may work in one of the squatter settlements in Karachi, such as Orangi, where thousands of families are crammed together in self-built homes where the authorities refuse to install any sewerage. Or they may be involved with projects in the rural areas in the Sind desert where infant mortality can be 1:4 in the first year and anything between one and three mothers die in childbirth.

But the hardest logistical problems will be faced in the remote and mountainous northern areas where 10,000 people may be scattered through 50 to 80 villages along a valley 40 miles long. Many of the students here and elsewhere in the country will work with units established by the Aga Khan Health Services, another arm of the foundation's activities in the country.

The university board chairman, Mr Shamsh Kassim-Lakha, says: "The health students will be trained to look at health not as a problem of curing one individual's disease but to look at the whole community."

The university admitted the first students to its medical school two years ago. While the country's other medical schools use a simple test of merit, the Aga Khan uses a more rigorous method, beginning with a verbal and numerical reasoning test which leads to a "shortlist" two-and-a-half times the planned intake. The initial selection aims to find the applicants with leadership potential, social awareness, powers of independent thought, and evidence of diverse interests.

There is no quota for Ismaili Muslims and fewer than 10 per cent of the existing students come from the Aga Khan's own strain of Islam. Only about a fifth are from outside Karachi, a symptom of the concentration of educational opportunities in the city, and only a tiny fraction are from poorer backgrounds, but 40 per cent are female in a culture where women still rarely leave the home.

Mr Shamsh Kassim-Lakha says: "We have decided no student who is otherwise qualified for admission will be denied an education solely for

financial reasons."

By Western standards the tuition fees are modest — a little more than £1,000 a year for Pakistani nationals although the overseas student fee is \$8,660. But in the current academic year 37 of the 195 students were given financial aid through the university and a further 34 obtained scholarships from other sources. The university makes available a battery of loans, grants and scholarships but these are subject to a means test. Even the poorest students are required to pay something towards their tuition and maintenance — an axiom of the approach adopted throughout the foundation's operations.

As most of the students come from Karachi, the vast majority live at home, although the university provides a limited amount of high-quality accommodation on campus.

A conventional academic structure for the medical students leads to a first experience of clinical subjects in the second year, while junior clerkships, equivalent to internship, begin in the third year, with senior clerkships in the final two years. In total the students will spend not only their term-time but vacations too for two-and-a-half years in clinical teams switching from one area of experience to another.

Even though the community health studies already comprises a fifth of the course there is pressure for it to be made one of the main areas for study during the clerkship period, but this thorny issue remains unresolved.

This question apart, it is nevertheless clear that community health studies will continue to give the medical college its distinctive character. Young medical students will see at first hand the health problems of their country and have a hand at least in trying to find some of the solutions.

Dr Bryant and his colleagues are the first to admit that they do not know how successful their experiment will be. Nor are they to be drawn on how long it will be before they can pass a judgement on the progress made.

Mr Kassim-Lakha speaks for the university when he says that even if only 15 to 20 per cent of their graduates eventually practise in the target rural and urban underprivileged areas, this would be regarded as a success.

But the other big question is how the medical college itself will develop. Top of the agenda is the question of research and postgraduate study. Traditionally most Pakistanis have gone abroad for postgraduate training, either to the United Kingdom or more recently to the United States and Canada. Professor Vellani says: "We

have not really developed our own training programmes. This is something this institution wants to get started on as soon as it possibly can, hopefully in 1987 in time for the first batch of graduates."

But there simply will not be the capacity at the Aga Khan University to take on 100 students to a postgraduate programme.

He says: "We have to do the best we can in five years and provide a person who is useful in practice and not someone who is totally dependent on yet more training to become competent. In the UK one would not consider a person competent until at least a year after graduation."

"We cannot afford this. Attitudes have to be adjusted to learning through a lifetime — they have to learn from their experience."

Research is a vital component of any higher education institution — and the university is eager to establish a capability in this area. Many of the academics who have been attracted back by the project after years working in the West are anxious to continue and develop their research interests.

The possibilities are almost boundless. Dr Vellani lists just a few: the pharmaceutical properties of herbal and other traditional medicines; the epidemiology of infectious diseases; hypertension in the urban areas; and the construction of truly accurate physiological values for the Pakistani community instead of continuing to work with irrelevant British ones.

While the Aga Khan has provided the basic fabric of the hospital, the medical school has not been slow in helping to endow it. The Aga Khan himself told guests at the inauguration ceremony that targets set for 1993 had already been exceeded. Much of the money has gone on creating the chairs — 19 at the last count at \$750,000 each.

The original plan had been for 100 full-time faculty members — 65 clinical and the rest basic science. But the decision to emphasize community health science added a further fifth to the academic establishment. Although American and Canadian universities have been closely involved in the academic design of the university, only about 10 per cent of the faculty is expatriate. Many are Pakistani nationals who have returned from highly successful careers abroad to work at the university. Dr Vellani spent 15 years in Britain, for example, while the professor of surgery, Professor Farhat Moazzam, spent 17 years in the US, where he was professor of surgery at the University of Florida.

One of the foreign stars of the medical school, Dr David Ulmer, who had previously worked at the Drew University in Watts, recognized as a highly successful use of a university as an instrument of social engineering.

The university is eager to build the status of another of the caring professions — nursing — and has operated a nursing school on the site since 1983. This is now joined with the medical college in the faculty of health sciences, with a nursing degree under consideration.

Although the institution is Pakistan's first private university, awarded a charter by the Zia government two years ago, another three are now in the pipeline. The government obviously hopes they will be free of the student unrest which has affected the country's state universities in recent years.

Certainly General Zia made his views about student activity perfectly clear at the inauguration ceremony — he was against it.

His comments attacking student "discipline" captured the headlines in the government-owned press: "The atmosphere of this university is entirely academic and free from the incidents and indiscipline and political manipulation which has been the main cause of the deterioration of academic standards of many institutions in Pakistan today."

The Aga Khan is planning further faculties for "his" university — but they are not likely to be based in Pakistan. Other countries where Ismaili influence is strong are likely to be chosen, although no announcements were made last month.

On the drawing board are a faculty of Islamic studies, to cope with the stresses of urbanization on Islam, and a faculty of development studies to guide the national policies of countries in the non-industrialized world. The aim, in the Aga Khan's own words, is to create an "enlightened intellectual environment. The Karachi faculty promises to achieve this for medical education at least."

Norman Lindop reconsiders issues raised by the report that bears his name

The chairman of a committee of inquiry whose report has been published is in an odd position. To the world at large he or she is not only the personification of the committee and its report, but is also expected to have intimate knowledge of how the report is being dealt with. I have long ago got used to the fact that, to the Government department commissioning the inquiry, nothing is more painful than the committee that has formally ceased to exist than the chairman is regarded more as a once useful midwife than a still responsible parent of the perhaps unwelcome infant, and is far from being the confident of ministers as is generally assumed. I make no complaint about that; I think it is important to preserve not only the form but the substance of the independence of the advice tendered. Nor have I any *amour propre* in respect of reports of committees which I have been privileged to chair, in fact I strongly deplore the use of my name to describe what has been in each case a team effort.

Just occasionally, however, I do feel that I am more in the dark than everyone else — as when I have to rely on press reports as to the reactions to a report, and even as to the extent of consultation. This was also what happened

after the data protection committee report was published; when, in due course, legislation followed I was often embarrassed by my inability to answer the simplest questions about the Government's intentions about the Bill as it passed through Parliament, to the obvious astonishment of those who assumed I would be in the know.

Neither do I think a former chairman is in any special position with respect to other members of the committee when it comes to debating the issues raised by the report: as signatories (and if there are not stated dissents) all members are equally committed to the recommendations and should be free to speak as they wish — the chairman should not be presumed to be the only one capable of interpreting the views of the group, nor should he be expected to react to all comments on the report. Nor, if the chairman does speak, should those words be given exceptional emphasis.

All of which may be taken as an introductory disclaimer to what follows; these are my personal views on issues raised by, but in some cases not discussed in, the report. They are not the views of the former committee.

Validation revisited

I have recently found myself sharing a platform with Professor Philip Reynolds, chairman of the academic standards group of the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals, and with John Bevan, chief officer of the National Advisory Body. The discussions prompted me to put pen to paper about the reception to the report. John Bevan commended it for fulfilling this aim, and indeed with the strong Oxford influence in the NAB it could scarcely do otherwise. The contribution of university staff to the detailed work of the CNA, its boards and committees has in fact been immense and of crucial significance in attracting public esteem and confidence (and it has been paid for by the universities).

At the heart of the huge system of public sector validation, therefore, we have an organization declaring that its *début* is to apply standards determined in the academically autonomous university sector to the non-autonomous public sector, and to keep things that way. Why, one wonders, if the publicly acceptable criterion of ultimate respectability is academic autonomy, has not the council included this among its objectives for its associated institutions? It would indeed have seemed presumptuous in the mid 1960s, when the CNA was set up and public sector higher education was small and exclusively dependent upon the universities, to include such aims; but 20 years on some recognition of profound changes in the higher education scene would surely be appropriate.

The plain fact now is, it seems to me, that some public sector institutions of higher education, thanks to strong internal academic development and to a 20-year tutelage to the CNA system which they are now out-growing, are better able to guarantee the standards of their undergraduate courses than some universities, and could be trusted to maintain these standards without the big stick of external (dis)approval being waved at them.

For that is what "peer review" in CNA terms boils down to — it is judgement by peers but in a prejudiced situation; however well the "partners" to the operation agree, at the heart of the relationship is an asymmetry of power — one side can cast the other into outer darkness. Peer review is a splendid principle, highly commended in the report, let it be widely exposed and set free from the tyranny of external (sometimes arbitrary) sanction. Acceptance of the external validation principle, and peer review carried out under its aegis, is certainly beneficial during the development and growing-up period in the life of an institution and produces results; there comes a time, however, when the price paid becomes too high and the asymmetry irksome and unnecessary.

When the NAB speaks of "the crucial importance of maintaining a system of external quality assurance of course" it obviously believes that the power imbalance must be preserved. Moreover it also appears to accept that such a process does assure quality, and that only if it is carried out at course level is it effective. I think I must dissent from all three propositions; I do not believe that peer assessment must be carried out within an administrative context, I do not believe that any purely external method of monitoring can assure standards can only be assessed on a course basis.

Any discussion of academic standards must home in on the universities, whose internal academic arrangements were beyond the terms of the inquiry, but which are regarded as the standard setters. The CNA has attempted itself to make awards "comparable in standards to awards granted and conferred by universities". The NAB has enthusiastically commended it for fulfilling this aim, and indeed with the strong Oxford influence in the NAB it could scarcely do otherwise. The contribution of university staff to the detailed work of the CNA, its boards and committees has in fact been immense and of crucial significance in attracting public esteem and confidence (and it has been paid for by the universities).

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There are those to whom the idea of a national system is important *per se*; it is perhaps surprisingly supported by local authority bodies, probably for reasons of bureaucratic convenience, but in some cases it may also reflect some insecurities in the relatively unfamiliar field of higher education. It would be well to reflect upon the enthusiasm of the bureaucrats for centralized systems of control; experience suggests caution. And for those for whom public accountability is essentially a moral issue I would seriously question whether what we see in day-to-day CNA validation is morally superior to properly conducted internal validation exercises which draw on outside assessors. In public sector experience national systems are inseparable from heavy bureaucracy and requirements for conformity. Yet when it comes to public perceptions of higher education the university system, for all its dispersion of decision-making and its tolerance of variation, is a good deal more effective than that across the binary line.

Whether quality can be assured by external means is the next question. Up to a point of threshold acceptability it obviously can; to compare public sector institutions today with what they were 20 years ago is to witness the effects which external validation has, painstakingly and often painfully carried out page-by-page consideration of proposed schemes and courses, by far the more important development has been the growth inside the institutions of expertise in exercising academic judgement on the part of individuals and of groups, and the fostering of an internal climate which encourages, indeed requires, frank criticism between peers internally, and also requires the contribution of external peers — the development, in other words, of a strong self-critical academic body, constantly seeking external criticism and advice.

Only when this has happened can one rely on the quality of the product being adequately monitored; no external validator or group of validators can do that, it can only be done within the institution, and it will only be done well when the self-critical conscience-led academic community, supported by its external collaborators and peers, accepts full responsibility for its own judgements, and is not able to shuffle off any part of that responsibility. Our report has been criticized for complacency and conservatism in apparently commending an old-fashioned "community of scholars" concept. I see nothing to apologize for, but it may be worth pointing out that nowhere do we say that this is a sufficient condition, though it is a necessary one. I very much doubt whether most universities know much about internal validation as it is known and practised in the best public sector institutions.

In view of the size and complexity of the task course-by-course validation, by which the NAB appears to set such a store, must surely give way to a more broadly based approach to assessment. When course-by-course validation was invented by the National Council for Technological Awards in the 1950s each institution had only one or two courses; no one envisaged the vast array of courses which has now developed. Those who insist on validation by course as the only way should

come clean; what they are saying is that they do not trust the institutions. But were we inconsistent in advocating more responsibility for institutions, when the report draws attention to a few cases where high standards have not been maintained? Not, I think, within the context of our plea for greater internal academic responsibility. For the characteristic of an institution where lapses, in spite of external validation, occur is the absence of a true academic conscience; the failure of an institution, in spite of prodding from the CNA, to develop sufficient internal academic coherence to tackle its own problems. There is a limit to what the external validators can do if an institution does not behave as a true academic community.

There is another word which is much in vogue, nowadays, and it crops up in the NAB document — accountability. "The maintenance of standards requires an external accountability in which the external assessors are appointed by and report to an outside body." The external assessors are not defined — are they validators or examiners? And what standards are being maintained? — of course submissions, in-course assessments, final examinations, or quality of graduates? And why must accountability be associated only with appointment of assessors by an outside body? Once again, what is the particular virtue of an outside body (undefined) except to those who inherently distrust the institutions?

But the nub of the issue, for the NAB and others, lies elsewhere — "the sector would be weakened if it (external validation) were removed... the principle of self-validation... has implications for the status and general accountability of the institutions involved which might prove detrimental to the purposes of public sector higher education."

Not only do they not trust the institutions, they seem to be afraid of them. How otherwise do we account for these circular (if vague) presentiments of doom? The purposes of public sector higher education have been defined and re-defined over the years as the system has developed; such definitions as have been attempted have come from government, or



The author is principal of the British School of Osteopathy.

more often, from the institutions themselves. Local authorities were noticeably reticent until the NAB came on the scene; now their representative bureaucracy, apparently afraid that somehow power may shift, utters vague warnings; it places emphasis on control, where the true interests of academic standards would emphasize responsibility. Controls of a kind there must be, of course, and no one questions the need for an administrative overview and overall plan; that would continue to curb any tendencies to academic drift, for example. But the institutions have a right to own their own souls.

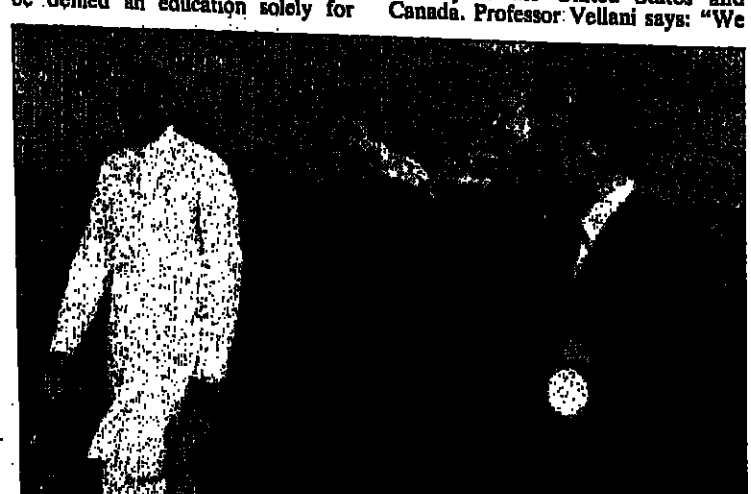
The NAB has a point — or rather half a point — when it says that the committee's brief did not extend to universities' internal academic arrangements. I make no comment on that, since I accepted the brief, but I am more than ever convinced as a result of the inquiry that a serious and inexcusable injustice is being done to the public sector by imposing upon it different validation arrangements from those thought appropriate to universities. The binary divide occurred for historical and political reasons and has administrative and financial implications; there are no longer any defensible grounds for including validation status in the list of arbitrary discriminations.

The universities are apparently considered adequately to be safeguarding standards on undergraduate courses by being subject to peer review in the research field, a pretty monumental non-sequitur of the trials and tribulations of what is known in the public sector as validation that doubts are from time to time expressed whether all is indeed for the best in that best of all possible worlds — or whether, to change the analogy, the emperor's clothes are after all adequate. The dilemma is plain — if justice is to be done a single system of validation should span the binary divide — which should it be?

The author is principal of the British School of Osteopathy.



The problem: the squatter settlement of Orangi in Karachi where thousands of families are crammed into shanty homes.



The benefactor: the Aga Khan (second from right) with Mr Shamsh Kassim-Lakha, General Zia and Dr David Ulmer.

Richard Cobb



Looking for Blondie among the past participants

Eight-thirty was telephone time. It generally went just when I was halfway through my breakfast. As usual, I went to the phone. Answering the phone at this early hour — one could at least pick out the voice the other end, as the Big Dipper had not started up yet — seemed part of my liaison duties, though it had not been included in the instructions I had had from the Air Ministry at the time of my interview there.

"Could I speak to Blondie?" said a suggestive, caressing female voice with the long, open Mancunian "a"s. I asked the voice if it could provide Blondie with a Christian name. "Oh yes," she replied eagerly. "His name is Stefan." I pointed out that we had 25 Stefan in that hotel alone; they easily outnumbered all the others, including the Zbigniews; and I could not imagine one of the local cinema usherettes in their rather fatigued black velvet dresses coming to terms with one of the last; the 25 must have been under some considerable disadvantage, though I was surprised to learn from one of my early morning callers that one such had escaped from that extreme end of the alphabet and was known to this particular girl as Fred.

Well, said the rich voice, with a note of triumph, this Stefan had short very fair hair, pale blue eyes, was about 20, or 25 at the most, and had charming manners. I suggested, rather wearily, and in the knowledge that my copious breakfast (RAF rations) was getting cold — the phone fortunately was in the dining-room, so that I could see it getting cold — that at least 15 of the resident Stefan could answer to that general description; perhaps the best thing would be that she give me her Christian name, and then I could put it out, throw it out like a tennis ball, to the assembled Stefan, as they waited with their forks suspended.

She said it was Madge. "Anyone know a Madge?" It seemed that three Stefan knew a Madge. They went to the phone in turn. Two of them came away, holding their pink paper napkins, saying it was not *Mier* Madge. The third Stefan called me back from my table, he could not understand what the girl was saying, would I talk to her? She said she would be waiting for Stefan (Blondie) at 6 that evening outside the Cleveleys Hydro. I gave him the message, which he received with a grin.

Stefan had about the highest turnover of any of them

This Stefan had about the highest turnover of any of them. The previous week, the daily morning caller had been a Doris; the week before that, an Edna. They too had been cinema usherettes. But, in my first week in the hotel — I was at once introduced to my phone duties — there had been regular calls from a Beryl, who apparently worked in one of the innumerable bars in the Winter Gardens. Perhaps Miss Observation could have handled this sort of thing, there must have been some not very hidden lesson in social history. Of course, it was obvious, cinema usherettes and girls who worked behind bars would be easy to meet.

Anyhow, despite the regularly interrupted breakfasts, I came rather to pride myself on my increasing skill in dealing with this sort of situation, even though some of the callers, all of whom used the long open "a"s, made my task much more difficult by providing scarcely the slightest hint to identify. "I only saw him in the dark, we went to a children's playground, there was no moon, I could not see his face," we

went under the West Pier, he kissed my hand, he had a funny sort of accent, foreign of course, but ever so polite, a proper gentleman". A fat lot of good that would be, they were all so polite, and the older they were, the more elaborate would be their politeness. But the elderly, often monocled, close-cropped Legionnaires were rarely my customers at this early hour. For one thing, their English was generally so bad as to make almost any form of verbal communication impossible, and nothing was being done to improve it, whereas the young pilots were given top priority for English lessons.

In this respect, the Air Ministry and scores of Madges, Dorises, Beryls and Ednas seem to have stumbled on much the same immediate aims. Both put the trained young pilots at the top of their lists. Of course, my colleagues and I were also closely associated in this educational process, as the whole purpose of our presence on the South shore was to provide our younger pupils with a sufficient smattering of English to enable them to be operational. We were also improving their chances with the local girls, though we had not actually been briefed on that aspect of our duties.

We taught by day, they took over in the evening

Certainly, from the start, I felt this felt very much within the scope of my recently acquired educational mission, my morning presence at the telephone being so clearly related to our class-work in the old office block halfway to Squires' Gate. The girls and ourselves were in it together, though we worked at a different timetable. We taught by day, they took over in the evening, with extra courses laid on at night. We taught in what we left out. We hammered away at simple technical terms and the basic verbs, they provided the intimacy and luxury of conversation and endearment.

I never discussed this aspect of our work with Harold Acton, but I think Barker and O'Grady held a view similar to mine, though, not living as I did in a hotel requisitioned for officers of the Polish Air Force, they would not have had to put in the many hours at the telephone that I took on so readily, mostly out of a natural curiosity.

I fancied myself too in this new role, if not as a procurer, then as a sort of regular go-between, even an unofficial, yet trusted, confessor. Indeed, some of the morning callers became so used to my answering voice, distinctive with its unfamiliar Southern accent, that they would often greet me quite warmly, even enriching me with small pieces of information about the more intimate habits of the pupils that we seemed to be sharing. It didn't seem likely that there would be any pickings for myself; I don't think I ever gave the matter a thought. Sexually, at 23, I was still very immature and quite unsure of myself (I had been to a public school, and at Merton girls had rarely been in evidence).

But I very much fancied myself in this role of observer. I was also delighted at the rapid progress in spoken English made by those of my pupils on whose behalf I received the most regular calls. I could not help feeling that I was developing at least some of the qualities that, in a different context, would have enabled me to have taken part in the running of an establishment both discreet and designed to meet the widest range of demands. Perhaps I had missed my vocation.

In the first part of a series on anthropology, Edmund

What is anthropology about? Malinowski's sexist definition was: "The study of Man (embracing Woman)". It shrewdly summarizes what is more austere formulated as: "At the core of modern social and cultural anthropology is the study of kinship". But why? Perhaps we should turn the question round: "What is anthropology not about?" After all, if anthropology is "the study of Man" then who is not an anthropologist? All branches of the humanities, all the so-called social sciences, most varieties of medicine and large parts of general biology might stake a claim to parts of the anthropological terrain. So what is left for anthropology as such?

One common view, shared even by professional academics, is that anthropologists are mere scavengers for scandalous curiosities. Who else but an anthropologist is likely to know anything about: stoatpogon, cannibalism, phallic cults, emphysema, ritualized homosexuality, human sacrifice...? Anthropologists first acquired a reputation for specializing in the unmentionable sometime around 1760. When Darwin came on the scene a century later, his outrageous theory that "men are descended from apes" fitted admirably with the established pattern. Darwin is now respectable; anthropology remains suspect.

Over time, the subject, if you can call it such, has evolved in various directions. Nineteenth-century anthropologists were preoccupied with origins: the origin of man as a species, the origin of religion, of rational thought, of tools and weapons, of agriculture, of cities, of trade, of marriage and the family, of property, of the state, of kinship, of art, of racial differences.

Most of what they wrote on such matters now seems quite absurd. The fossil hunters and the archaeologists still pursue some of these questions but social and cultural anthropologists who concern themselves with religion, or rationality, or exchange, or kinship, or modes of production or forms of political organization seldom worry much about how it all began. We cannot know, so why guess?

That is the biggest change. Nineteenth-century anthropology was about the past. It developed within the context of European colonialism. The native peoples of the colonial empires were like Aristotle's natural slaves, lacking in all human rights. When anthropologists studied such people they thought of them as childish "savages", almost as remote from the anthropological observer as Darwin's missing link. Primitive peoples were not regarded as fully human; they were "living fossils", survivors from the remote past whose customs could tell

Observers who are part of the system



us something about our own very remote ancestors.

If we leave aside the fossil hunters and the archaeologists, who have now hived themselves off into several quite separate academic disciplines, late twentieth-century anthropology is mostly about the present and the very recent past. Anthropologists make a speciality of studying kinship not only because no one else does so but because, if the social context is present, the intimate person to person relationships of the domestic household lie right at the core of everything that can be directly observed.

Granted this special emphasis on kinship, anthropologists still spend most of their time studying the customs and artifacts of people from "other" cultures but they pursue their inquiries in quite a different way.

Typically, at the beginning of this century, the relationship between the anthropological observer and his informant was that of master to servant. Ethnographic information was collected by interrogation rather than by observation. At this period it was normal that nearly all native customs should be presented either as repulsive or childishly absurd. No modern anthropologist would want to equate others with inferiority. Quite the contrary.

It is now argued that cultural otherness deserves scholarly attention because it shows us just how diverse human cultural behaviour and fully viable forms of human society can be. It challenges our most basic moral presupposition: the conviction that, in

the last analysis, "we" (the Western educated intelligentsia, the products of twentieth century higher education, as celebrated in the title of this journal) alone have privileged access to what is true and good.

One important consequence of this shift is that it has bit the relationship between the anthropologist and his informants has been inverted. The anthropologist is now a pupil, his informants are teachers and friends. The anthropologist seeks to understand the coherence and "the common sense" of cultural otherness; his informants find cultural otherness in the life style of the anthropologist. In the ideal case the research becomes a joint enterprise between observer and observed.

There are many different ways of trying to do this. In the past, the anthropologist has tried to grasp with cultural otherness. Though fashions change, this partly reflects the life styles of the anthropologists themselves. As seen from Dover and further north most French anthropologists appear to be permanently engaged in a time-wasting exercise of comparative idealist philosophy; as seen from Calais and further south all British anthropologists appear to be permanently committed to the repetitive study of empirical ethnographic trivia.

But even within such stereotypes there is a dialectical progression over time; the high fashion of one generation becomes anathema to the next.

At first the study of pre-literate societies, as distinct from the study of morphological variation within the species *Homo*, was seen as a further extension of archaeology, an additional technique for the investigation of "pre-history". But in England the belief that such societies, as observed in the twentieth century, could be thought of as survivors from remote antiquity had lost credibility by 1920. Thereafter, for the next 40 years, under the inspiration of the meticulously detailed field researches of Bronislaw Malinowski and Raymond Firth and the reductionist analyses of segmentary kinship structures (mostly African) which followed models provided by Edward Evans-Pritchard and Meyer Fortes, social anthropologists seemed to lose all interest in the reconstruction of history.

The key word in their vocabulary was "system". Travellers' tales had always presented alien customs piecemeal so that they appeared ridiculous as well as strange, thus reinforcing the prejudices that all foreigners, especially if they had dark skins, were little better than childish imbeciles. Social anthropologists in the new style sought to demonstrate to their readers that any bundle of alien, "exotic" customs, when studied in detail in its original context, always added up to a perfectly coherent system, a total way of life which made satisfactory sense to those who lived that way.

From a moral point of view the "systemic" structural-functional position of these authors was a great improvement on what had gone before. It was implicit in all such analyses that the human beings who operated these social systems deserved respect as equals. But the lack of any historical dimension to the analysis was a serious defect. The social systems described in anthropological monographs of the period were thought of as static species types which deserved to be preserved like endangered natural "functional integration" the authors greatly exaggerated the coherent self-sufficiency and separateness of the systems they described. They may not have invented "tribalism" but they certainly reinforced it.

This was an attitude which could only flourish in the environment of a paternalistic colonialism; it had no attractions at all for the western educated rulers of the post-colonial independent states of Africa and Asia, many of whom were prepared to use ruthless methods to force the "backward" sections of their

Leach looks at the development of the discipline



Left: Missionary John Campbell negotiating with chiefs in South Africa.

Right: The Headhunters of Borneo. This is the cover illustration to Carl Bock's account of his travels in Borneo and Sumatra for the Dutch colonial authorities, published in January 1986 by the Oxford University Press in Hong Kong.

continued from previous page

population to participate actively in the modern world economy.

One consequence of this was that, from around 1960, British social anthropologists shifted their attention away from the politically explosive theme of the functional relationship between kinship organization, subsistence economics, and localized social structures to more "theoretical", less immediately tendentious, fields such as the patterning of symbolism in ritual and myth. This had the further consequence that "British" social anthropology still has an individual style as compared, let us say, with francophone anthropology but it is no longer the case that the British style and the American style are readily distinguished.

But if structural-functionalism is now old hat, what have we got instead? There have been a number of passing fashions which seem to me to be of little permanent consequence. There is a noisy clique of "Marxist anthropologists" who use a new kind of jargon for old established concepts, eg "society" is now spelled "social formation". And there is an equally noisy clique of "feminist anthropologists" who insist that only when classical ethnography has been rewritten by women anthropologists will we be able to escape from the gross masculine bias that permeates all existing social anthropology as it has developed ever since 1920.

There are some good anthropologists both among the Marxists and among the feminists but I cannot see that the quality of their anthropology has been improved either by their political commitment or their language.

Then there is the vogue for marrying the methodologies of social demography and social anthropology in the study of the social history of Western Europe. I am old fashioned. For me,

the "other cultures" of anthropology need to be much further away than just the other side of the Straits of Dover. As far as I am concerned, social/cultural anthropology is still primarily about the life styles of "exotic" non-European peoples.

But how about the structuralists or near-structuralists? The influence of the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss on anglophone anthropology is very difficult to assess. Although there are a small number of committed disciples both in the United States and in Canada who write as if every sentence ever published by the great guru deserves to be treated as the Word of God, the position throughout the anglophone world is, for the most part, much more guarded. Everyone recognizes that the general theory of exchange formulated by Lévi-Strauss in 1949 was a significant advance on what Mauss, relying heavily on the empirical observations of Malinowski, had devised in 1924. This theory has subsequently been further developed but not by Lévi-Strauss or even in directions which Lévi-Strauss would be likely to admire.

Likewise everyone recognizes that the badly flawed article on *The Structural Study of Myth*, first published in 1955, broke completely new ground in applying notions derived from distinctive feature theory in phonology to the study of myth. A great many anglophone anthropologists have subsequently played around with these ideas, with varying success. But I would suppose that most of them have very mixed feelings about the enduring significance of Lévi-Strauss's own elaboration of his original argument in the pages of the four volumes of *Mythologiques*. Like the 13 volumes of Frazer's *The Golden Bough* it is a work that seeks to prove an improbable and repeatedly modified thesis about fundamental principles of human thinking by piling on enormous numbers of illustrative examples. The author's erudition provokes awe but I am not

persuaded. Most of what now passes for "structuralism" in anglophone anthropology owes more to de Saussure's *Semiotique* and C. S. Pierce's *Semiotic* than it does to Lévi-Strauss.

But in any case *Mythologiques* was completed in 1972, where have we got to now? Lévi-Strauss's "structuralism" which purported to arrive at generalized, highly abstract, propositions concerning "the human mind" was quite explicitly a dialectical response to the "functionalist empiricism" of the British social anthropologists on whom Lévi-Strauss continues to heap abuse, eg as in the pages of *A View from Afar* (1985), but it was equally anti-historical. In a celebrated metaphor dating from 1961 Lévi-Strauss claimed that the "societies studied by anthropologists" are "cold" societies which operate like clockwork and "tend to remain indefinitely in their initial state" which "appear to us as static societies with no history". By contrast modern societies are "hot" societies. They work like a steam engine, they are continuously generating disequilibrium (on the lines of Marxist theory). By implication they fall outside the scope of anthropological analysis altogether.

I imagine that very few professional anthropologists in any country would accept this dichotomy today. So we come back to where we started. Where does history fit in? Very recently the American anthropologist Marshall Sahlins and colleagues in Chicago have begun to suggest an answer. It inverts the standard assumption that Western ethnographers have been able to provide us with innumerable descriptions of static "traditional societies". In order to demonstrate that this is a fallacy Sahlins takes as his exemplar the case of the death of Captain Cook in Hawaii in 1779.

The sequence of events starting with Cook's arrival at Kealakekua bay on January 17, and ending with Cook's

assassination on February 14 were recorded at the time in great detail in several of the journals maintained by Cook's companions.

Since no European had ever previously visited Kealakekua bay one might suppose that these accounts provide a direct first hand account of the "traditional society" of Hawaii at that date. But from the Hawaiian point of view Cook was a manifestation of the god Lono and the events recorded in the European journals were not, strictly speaking, "traditional" events at all. They were a drastically reconstructed improvisation designed to accommodate a set of extraordinary and unprecedented circumstances.

Yet today, by skillfully combining the information contained in the original journals with reports of what was allegedly remembered about these events by early nineteenth-century Hawaiians, Sahlins and his colleagues have been able to build up an extremely convincing account of the "real" history of the matter. This is a major contribution both to Hawaiian history and to anthropological theory.

But the Hawaiian case is not unique; it exemplifies the norm. Whenever

European observers (travellers, explorers, missionaries, soldiers, shipwrecked mariners, anthropologists) have arrived at hitherto "unknown" corners of the map they have never been in a position to record objectively what was going on. The observer himself/herself is invariably a part of what is happening; the act of "observing the natives" is itself a key incident in the history of the native society that is under observation.

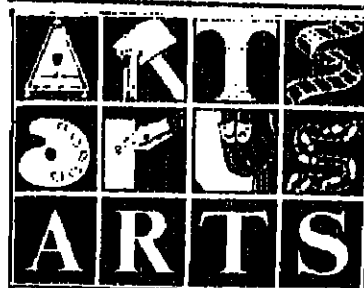
The implications of this kind of reflexivity for the future development of anthropology are far reaching. It is not simply that ethnography will need to be rewritten to allow for the fact that the ethnographic observer is never a neutral figure in what is observed but there is the potentiality that the whole history of colonialism over the past two centuries or more may be re-writable "from the native point of view". I find this a very exciting prospect but without the participation of anthropologists it will be wholly impossible.

Professor Sir Edmund Leach is a fellow of King's College, Cambridge and a past president of the Royal Anthropological Institute.



Richard Leakey (right) and Professor Alan Walker examine a *Homo erectus* skull discovered by Kenya's Lake Turkana.

Richard Leakey, director of the National Museums of Kenya, digs out the bone of a *Homo erectus* who lived 1.6 million years ago.



Brian Morton
on Barcelona,
a review of
events held
in London
and Norwich.

City modernism

Homage to Barcelona: the city and its art 1888-1936
Torres García: Grid-Pattern-Sign 1924-1944
Hayward Gallery, until February 23

"Homage" isn't strictly accurate, since this is a tribute to a city, not a person. In any case, given the range and bulk of material on show, the Hayward's Barcelona emerges with an almost stereotypically multiple modernist personality. There is probably too much on show (a Hayward vice); any exhibition that depends to such an extent on a pricey, 300-page catalogue for background may be falling short of, or overshooting, its audience.

The anti-modernist backlash in recent years has had the salutary effect of refocusing attention on the geographic fringes within the movement (an emphasis that spurred the best of the writing on the subject anyway, such as Malcolm Bradbury's and James MacFarlane's 1980 Penguin anthology). Barcelona - like Vienna, Chicago, Oslo, Glasgow - had its own highly distinctive version of modernism, and the Hayward "Homage" serves the valid and valuable function of highlighting the local roots and international impact of both *Modernisme* and its younger, later offshoot, christened *Noucentisme* by the pseudonymous "Xeluis", Eugeni d'Ors.

In so far as the city has a single presiding artistic presence, it is not Picasso or Dalí or Miró - all well represented - but the architects Domènec i Montaner and Antoni Gaudí, whose elaborately connected buildings, disturbingly similar to Simon Rodia's "Watts Towers" in Los Angeles, give the place its curious dyspeptic aura.

Between its two great expositions of 1888 and 1929 (the exhibition stretches the latter end to take in the Civil War) Barcelona transformed itself; arguably the most important work of modern Catalan art is the city itself. On the geographical fringes of modernism, particularly in those places where academic values and a craft tradition exercised push-pull influences, it was the non-canonical artists that showed the most vigour. In Oslo it is to the extraordinary Vigeland Park that one turns for the clearest sense of the time, not to Munch; in Glasgow, to Rennie Mackintosh's designs and interiors. Gaudí's pre First World War Parc Güell is an elaborate, overgrown, and genuinely literal mix of sacred and profane. Again, and on a smaller scale,

Gaudí's furniture provides the best sense of a consistent artistic spirit.

One incidental and unfortunate problem of much of the painted work on show is its very familiarity. We perhaps don't look at "blue" Picassos any more, nor, except in a literary way, at Dalí; it is useful, though, to be reminded, via the picture of Carlos Casagemas, how good a portraitist Picasso could be, and to have Dalí de-allegorized by being reminded that the famous "Prenotions of Civil War" originally went under the more painterly title "Soft Construction with Boiled Beans".

Much of the most interesting Barcelona material has been beyond the main exhibition area. Like Odons and Cincuenta, the Hayward likes to run shows in tandem. Upstairs at the moment is the work of the Uruguayan, sometime Barcelonian, and inventor of "Universal Constructivism", Joaquín Torres García. This work, from Paris and Montevideo, spans two decades from the artist's fiftieth year to five years before his death in 1949. Outwardly simple work, it presents iconic images arranged in flat-plane boxes or grids in a way strikingly similar to later works by American Abstract Expressionists Richard Pousette-Dart and Adolph Gottlieb.

In the visual arts, the University of East Anglia helped foster the Catalan theme with an exhibition of sculpture and ceramics by the late Joan Miró (to whom, along with Roland Penrose, the Hayward show is dedicated). The Sainsbury Centre exhibition includes Miró's giant poster for Barcelona Football Club (for comparison, try to imagine Francis Bacon doing programme covers for Chelsea).

In music, there have been concerts of early and Renaissance pieces from the Catalan kingdom of Naples by Hyperion XX, and of modern pieces by the excellent Nash Ensemble who, alongside the familiar Granados and de Falla, included lesser-known material by Roberto Gerhard, a composer who merits far wider attention. Less sedate, but no less fascinating, were performances at the Institute of Contemporary Arts by avant-gardist Carles Santos, and by La Fura dels Baus (which translates as the parody-punk Vermen of the Sewers), a band which makes Britania's only likely parallel, the modish Bowdoin Ensemble, seem positively tame.

There is a violence in Catalan art (and in the hearts of Barcelona policemen, as Glasgow Rangers fans will tell you); its energies, from Dalí to La Fura, are hardly classically comfortable, but they are compelling.

Louise Page: a vindication of university drama teaching

Picking up speed



"There is a notion," says Louise Page, "that if you want to be a writer you'll just do it, and that there is therefore no point teaching people how to write. Of course there is no point at all if the person lacks a writer's perceptions, or has no ear for dialogue. But if they do have talent, going on a course can really speed up their experience of writing. So that instead of it taking until they're 35, by the age of 20 they have already coped with a lot of problems. And that's very useful."

She speaks from experience. Louise Page is that rare thing, a successful young playwright, who actually started making her living from writing at the tender age of 24. Now 30, she is known for such successes as *Salonika* (which won her the George Devine Award in 1982) and *Golden Girls* for the Royal Shakespeare Company. She can therefore look back on a career that she says seemed to her like "a very slow process", but from the outside looks remarkably like a career "speeded up".

The key to it all was that on leaving school she read drama at Birmingham University, and as a second-year option took the newly founded playwrighting course taught by David Edgar. Among her contemporaries was Terry Johnson, who has gone on to write the Royal Court hits *Justification* and *Cries from the Mammal House*. From Birmingham she went on to take an MA at Cardiff, learning practical theatre skills, and later she became playwright-in-residence at Sheffield. All in all then she is a living and breathing vindication of university drama teaching. And she is naturally outraged that the playwrighting course at Birmingham, which she herself taught after David Edgar left, has now been cut.

"In this country where we are so proud of Shakespeare we even put him on the back of money, I think it is very strange that drama is considered so dispensable. People have an idea that everyone in a drama department dashes about behaving like Noel Coward all the time. But there's a lot of

very hard work going on."

She argues too that state subsidy of playwrighting can make good economic sense. For her play *Salonika* she received a commissioning fee from the Royal Court of £1,500. "Now in terms of foreign earnings that play has brought £20,000 into this country. If I was a company making suspender buttons on a state subsidy that size, bringing in that sort of money, I'd be getting awards for it."

Her most recent work is for the Women's Playhouse Trust, an adaptation of *Beauty and the Beast* which opened at the Liverpool Playhouse on Wednesday and will transfer to The Old Vic on December 19. Having usually written for small casts and economic staging, she jumped at the chance offered by the WPT to do something "big, bright and spectacular" - "All the things people don't associate with feminism!"

Although she is fully supportive of the WPT, she has clearly grown very weary of the "woman playwright" label - a term which, when expressed as "among our foremost women playwrights" is, as she points out, fairly meaningless. But she looks on the bright side too: "Young woman playwright" she can see something about getting older. And it could be worse - I could be black as well." "Black", she emphasizes, "being a woman has

very little to do with my work. I write about what interests me. I don't sit down and think, 'I am a woman and therefore I must write this.' I suppose women's writing still has a long way to go."

It is still early days for her too. And she is currently keeping her options open, doing work of diverse kinds - a rewrite of *Golden Girls* for the West End, a monologue on nuclear science for Paines Plough, and (most unlikely perhaps) a musical for the Royal Court ("a theatre whose house style is always on the move"). But although she manages to adapt to different stylistic requirements, she has nevertheless established a consistent reputation for herself - as a "caring" writer, who presents characters as people and deals with emotions rather than issues.

Another current project, then, is a play on unemployment in the North, which will deal with it emphatically on the human level. "The big political plays of the early seventies were absolutely right and of their time, but they wouldn't be appropriate now. Now I think people's minds are pretty well made up, the political boundaries are drawn, and so any amount of shocking unemployment statistics won't change the mind of someone who thinks all unemployed people are scroungers. The hope is that if they are emotionally touched by it, perhaps then they will take it on board."

One of the marks of her success is that the academic study of drama is now entering her life in another way - as students test out on her their critical ideas about her work. "They say the most horrible things. 'Do you realize the obsession with food in your plays?' and I say 'What? I can't let myself believe the hype.' And actually when I look at the list of credits on the backs of the published plays I don't recognize myself as this accomplished person. I always think, 'How am I managing to fool all these people? When are they going to realize I'm not very good?'"

Lynne Truss

Events

Concerts:

Tomorrow, the Diamond, University of Ulster. The Ulster Orchestra, conducted by Jukka-Pekka Saraste, with soloist Thea Klag (clarinet).
Tomorrow, Great Hall, Goldsmiths' College, London. Goldsmiths' Youth Orchestra, conducted by Rupert Bond. J. Strauss, Delius, Kodaly, Beethoven.
Sunday, Fifth Hall, University of Sheffield. University Orchestra conducted by Colin Lawson. Programme includes Glazunov's Symphony No 5 in B flat minor.
Sunday, Mitchell Hall, University of Aberdeen. University Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Peter Innes: Messiaen, Copland, Brahms.
December 2, Duke's Hall, Royal Academy of Music. Sinfonia Concert.

Programme includes Beethoven's Symphony No 8.
December 4, Department of Music, University of Manchester. Gemilani Trio: Gemilani and J. S. Bach.
December 5, Holy Trinity Church, Guildford. University of Surrey Singers: Dvořák Mass in D.
December 5, Recital Hall, Royal College of Music. RCM 20th Century Ensemble, conducted by Edwin Roxburgh and Justin Connolly. Programme includes Boulez's *Turner*.
December 5, Rurner Sims Concert Hall, University of Southampton. Paul Crossley piano recital, including the sonata written for him in 1984 by Tippett.
December 7, Great Hall, University of Exeter. His Majesties Singers and Cornets.
December 7, St Andrew's Hall, Norwich. University of East Anglia Choir with the Wren Orchestra conducted by Julian Webb. Programme includes Beethoven's Symphony No 9.
December 7, Whitworth Hall, Uni-

versity of Manchester. University Chorus and Symphony Orchestra: Handel's *Jephtha*.
December 7, King's Hall, University of London. University of York University Choir and Orchestra conducted by David Greer. Programme includes Berlioz's *Te Deum*.
December 8, Great Hall, University of Nottingham. University Choir and Orchestra conducted by Nigel Osborne and Peter Nelson. Programme includes Beethoven's Mass.
December 10, Great Hall, University of Reading. Reading University Orchestra conducted by Nigel Burton, with Jonathan Dunsby (piano). Programme includes Mozart's Piano Concerto in D minor K466.
December 11, 2pm. University of Strathclyde. University Chorus and Brass Ensemble directed by Alan Tavenner. University Choir Service.
December 12, University of Lancaster. John Clegg (piano) Liszt celebration, including Liszt's Benediction.

Rubbish raised to artistic heights

Kurt Schwitters
Tate Gallery, until January 5

And so he panted, nailed, varnished, typographed, sold, printed, composed, collaged, deconstructed, whistled, loved and barked at the top of his voice with no respect for persons, the public, technique, traditional art or himself.

This is how the Dadaist Hans Richter remembered Kurt Schwitters, the man and the artist. Yet, in spite of all this profile, "almost frantic activity, or perhaps because of it, he remains an elusive personality, defying categorization. Although he is primarily associated with Dadaism, not only did Schwitters never become a Dadaist, he actually managed to get himself officially excluded as an undesirable "Expressionist", from the Berlin "Club Dada" in 1919.

No matter, for undeterred he continued as an one-man band, putting his very respectable native Hanover on the map of 20th-century avant-garde art in the process. Now, were the words of the poet and founder of Dadaism, Tristan Tzara that: "Dada-

ism is a state of mind" truer than in the case of Kurt Schwitters.

During a long career which spanned some thirty years and two world wars, he created an impressive output whose generic label *merz* became at the same time the magical key to its understanding. In true Dadaist fashion, he chanced upon the word *merz* by cutting it out from a letterhead with the words *Kommerz und Privatbank* and thus the Kurt Schwitters *merz* enterprises were born: *merz* collages, *merz* reliefs, *merz* poetry and performance, even a successful advertising and design agency, his *merz* *Werbenzenzeile*.

Having started his career as an abstract painter influenced by Expressionism of which several examples such as the oil paintings "The Bow Tie" or "Unveiling" or the drawing exhibition, Schwitters had his first exhibition in 1918 at Herwarth Walden's then famous "Sturm" gallery in Berlin.

One year later, he made his first collages of discarded material. The Tate exhibition focuses on the collages which he continued to make through-

out his career. And they are almost unbelievable in their intricacy and delicate beauty.

It is all too tempting to conjure up the touching image of this handsome six-foot tall man rummaging dustbins or scouring the gutter. He collected the humblest of all unwanted remains of human consumption and reinstated them into a new and dignified existence in his *merz* collages. But Schwitters was also an astute businessman who marketed his talent and services brilliantly. He was an eccentric but not a Bohemian. He liked his creature comforts too much.

Yet the work he considered his crowning achievement was a construction not only totally unpractical, but it also deprived him of the living space of his apartment, where it was built: the *merz*bau.

It occupied Schwitters continually between 1923 and 1937 when he became an exile from Nazi Germany, first in Norway, then between 1940 and 1948 in England. It was destroyed by bombing in 1941 and only a few eyewitnesses have survived to tell the story.

Apparently, the *merz*bau was begun as a sculptural column monstrously proliferating sideways and upwards through the ceiling into the apartment above, (luckily also owned by Schwitters) becoming a grotesque construction full of secret holes, protrudes and passages. It was dedicated to and filled with objects taken or even stolen from friends: a piece of Theo van Doesburg's tie, Sophie Taubert's bra, a bottle of Schwitters's urine, Moholy Nagy's socks... almost a sinister memento mori that their life is just as ephemeral as the miserable tokens which represent them.

So important was this "conceit" that Schwitters built another *merz*bau in Norway, but that was also accidentally destroyed by fire in 1951. Finally, shortly before his death in 1948, he had just begun yet another construction in a barn in Langdale Valley: his last work, the *merz*bau.

It is the ultimate befitting Dadaist irony that all which remains from the three most important projects Kurt Schwitters ever undertook in his *merz*-constructions are a few ephemera.

Sanda Miller



The *merz*bau, circa 1923

BOOKS

Policing: the impossible task



1906: a demonstration by the London unemployed

by P. A. J. Waddington

The Police of Britain
by Philip John Stead
Macmillan, £24.95
ISBN 0 02 930760 0
Control Unbecoming: the social construction of police deviance and control
by Maurice Punch
Duckworth, £7.95
ISBN 0 422 79210 1
Policing Industrial Disputes: 1893 to 1985
by Roger Geary
Cambridge University Press, £19.50
ISBN 0 521 30315 X

Despite the enormously increased attention paid to the police in recent years, a readable, comprehensive description of the British police has not been readily available until now. Fortunately, Philip John Stead has filled this gap admirably with his latest book, *The Police of Britain* (1983). It is a mainly historical account, charting the development of British police from its Saxon origins.

In addition to this historical description, there are useful chapters on the nature of the police service, career patterns of officers, different policing styles within the United Kingdom and the relationship between the police and the rest of the criminal justice system. Throughout the book, similarities and differences between British and other police systems are usefully identified. However, this book will rightly be criticized for its conservative approach. Stead is enthusiastic about the police, particularly the Metropolitan Police. Thus, he sees the achievement of Peel in establishing the Metropolitan Police, in the face of the parliamentary opposition, as a feat of genius. He shows little inclination critically to analyse the police wherever his complacency more than his reference to the

unpleasant scandal that gripped Scotland Yard during the early 1970s. This tepid way of dealing with the unfortunate fact of separating the CID from the uniform branch. Since this defect was remedied by Robert Mark's reforms, this unsavoury episode is regarded by Stead as closed. No mention is made of the accusations which led to the "Criminologist" inquiry, nor the obstacles which are alleged to have frustrated that engaged in it.

In a stark contrast, Maurice Punch does a detailed, concerned and conceptually sophisticated study of the corruption scandal which rocked the Metropolitan police during the late 1970s. The value of this study lies in the unique position that Punch enjoyed as a researcher: familiar with, and familiar to, the officers of the Metropolitan Police at the moment when, as he put it, "the shit hit the fan".

Much of the book is concerned with the scandal which rocked the force and exposed the myth of the police as a monolithic institution bound together by a code of solidarity and secrecy. Middle-ranking officers with a mission to maintain control of a force which had succumbed to an "indulgent" style of management, exposed questionable practices among officers investigating drug-trafficking. Junior ranks, fearful of being made scapegoats for practices which had tacitly been acknowledged and rewarded by their superiors, made accusations implicating the most senior officers. Much of this acrimony was provoked by the press.

The actual extent of corruption and its causes are obviously more difficult to investigate than their aftermath. In considering these issues Punch is careful to warn us that we are entering the realm of informed (very well-informed) speculation. Posing questions of the puzzle, a picture emerges of a police force suffering low morale and a sense of criticism about its handling of the Provo riots of the 1960s. Caution is urged about the adoption of a style of indulgent management and discipline. Faced with the massive influx of hard-drugs trafficking, the police were secured by "bending the rules" and establishing close relationships with members of the Chinese

underworld in which favours were exchanged. Corruption was not detected until acted upon earlier because minor rule-bending and acceptance of favours was widespread among the members of the force.

Punch believes that corruption is encouraged because the police have an impossible task - to detect crime while preserving civil liberties. Recognition of this underlying fact is of the utmost importance in the continuing debate about how best to control the police in Britain. Pressing the police to "do something" about drug abuse, racist attacks, and so on, while simultaneously denying them the means to do so, breeds endemic, albeit usually minor, deviant practices. Surrounding this with a web of procedural law and disciplinary regulations makes everyone in the organization a minor delinquent. This breeds a tolerance of deviant practices which inhibits the exposure of those engaged in more serious corruption. When corruption is finally exposed, the fundamental issue is "who should carry the can?" In Britain, as in Amsterdam, it is junior police officers who find themselves wholly responsible for their actions. What responsibility should those who manage and supervise them share when things go wrong? What responsibility should we, the public, accept for giving the police their "impossible mandate" in the first place?

Nowhere is the impossibility of the police task more obvious than in policing public disorder: disorderly means of achieving collective goals are fundamentally incompatible with parliamentary democracy and must be defeated, yet in defeating the mob the police must use no more than minimum force. However, it is precisely in this aspect of their role that the British police have, until recently, been so conspicuously successful compared to their counterparts throughout the world. This has been particularly evident in the policing of industrial disputes, which is the subject of Roger Geary's excellent monograph.

In 1893 - the last occasion when the military opened fire upon strikers - things were rather different. The police and military were little more than instruments of the local manufacturing classes who, being also magistrates, could order them to disperse rioting pickets with little regard to the degree of force used. It is Geary's thesis that during the early years of this century the police increasingly assumed full responsibility for maintaining order on picket-lines and successfully presented themselves as impartial guardians of the peace. The scale of disorder declined so that by the 1970s it amounted to little more than dual pushing and shoving. This relatively tranquil picture has been disturbed by increasingly aggressive government attitudes towards labour disputes and the acquisition by the police

of the technology of repression. Geary contends that the impetus towards reducing violence came from the "constitutionalization" of industrial conflict. With the rise of the labour movement union leaders feared that excessive violence on the picket-lines would adversely affect the electoral fortunes of the Labour Party. On the other side of the fence, central government feared that excessive use of force by the police would play into the hands of Labour. Interestingly enough, Geary argues that the hand of restraint was that of central government, through the increasing involvement of the Home Office. Also contributing to the reduction in violence were improvements in intelligence and police public order tactics. Better intelligence allowed a more measured response to the actual scale of the problem, avoiding the police being either overwhelmed by, or overwhelming, the pickets. More effective use of cordons reduced reliance upon the baton-charges as the preferred method of crowd control.

Therefore, Geary's thesis challenges the orthodoxy of both left and right. It was not police *force* which defeated violent pickets, but a tacit compact between the two sides to "cool it". On the other hand, the growing influence of central government and improvements in intelligence and tactics did not militate against the doctrine of "minimum force", but enhanced it.

Evans thinks it is worth recording that he only found three cases where secondary pickets tried to use "sheer presence of numbers as opposed to physical aggression" to deny workers access to their jobs (my italics). Paul Wiles' interesting paper on policing industrial action unfortunately was written before the miners' dispute. However, his thesis that recent structural changes in police forces have enabled them more easily to be used as part of the Government's strategy during major strikes has largely been substantiated by the events in the coalfields.

Bestrident the other papers is Lord Wedderburn's mastery survey of recent legal developments and their underlying policy objectives. He shows, convincingly, that as a result of the Conservative Government's legislation, the collective strength of the worker is now restricted to his own employment unit. Wedderburn's faith in the ability of trade unions' responsibility to exercise their social power unfettered by the law remains undimmed. Others, like myself, who believe that the evidence suggests this faith is misplaced, will continue to argue that some legal restraints on the conduct of industrial conflict are justified.

J. M. Thomson
J. M. Thomson is professor of law at the University of Strathclyde.

Ballots and pickets

Industrial Relations and the Law in the 1980s: Issues and future trends
edited by Patricia Fosh and Craig R. Little
Gower, £18.50 and £9.50
ISBN 0 566 00978 1 and 00981 1

The value of socio-legal studies is now well recognized in law schools throughout the United Kingdom. They are of particular importance in the field of labour law. In this collection of essays, the contributors explore the implications of employment and trade union legislation in the dark night that overtook labour relations in the 1980s, relying upon the results of some of the most recent empirical research. The essays make stimulating reading, but as Professor Lord Wedderburn notes, "No study of labour law can in this maelstrom of change be value-free"; and there is little attempt by the contributors to give an objective account of recent developments.

Perhaps the most rounded paper is Roderick Martin's essay on "Ballots and Trade Union Democracy: the role

of government". He concedes that the introduction of secret ballots will probably increase the level of participation in union elections. Even so, since the average turnout between 1972 and 1980 in the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers' elections under postal ballots was only 21 per cent of members, not too much can be expected, though Martin does not give any figures on the turnout at non-secret workplace ballots. His statement that "The NUM, of course, ballots members on individual areas following different practices in deciding upon local action", makes sad reading in the light of the recent dispute. However, Martin concludes that the introduction of ballots is ultimately unjustified, since trade unions no longer have special legal privileges, cannot deprive the individual of his livelihood and have already adequate procedures to eliminate corruption. The edures to eliminate corruption, he contends, is requirement of ballots, he contends, is an indirect method of reducing industrial conflict, increasing productivity and moderating wage settlements and thus are intended to weaken trade union power in a pluralistic democracy.

In his essay on the decline of the closed shop, Stephen Dunn argues that the closed shop, which continued to grow in spite of the Industrial Relations Act 1971, is now unlikely to

expand into new sectors of the economy owing to the reluctance of employers to encourage the institution and the difficulties of obtaining the necessary majorities for union membership agreements under the Employment Act 1982. Indeed, many of the "fragile" closed shops achieved in the 1970s may not survive in the new economic and legal climate. In my view, the closed shop, which is undoubtedly an infringement of the individual's freedom, can only be justified if it is recognized as in the interests of both trade unions and management. If, as Dunn suggests, this is not so, then the utilitarian justification for the closed shop is no longer available to its supporters. In the end, Dunn maintains that the continued existence of the closed shop will depend on workers' solidarity. If that is there, however, what is there to fear in the ballot requirements for the continuation of union membership agreements?

Stephen Evans's piece on picketing suggests that trade union officials are less ready to give support to members engaged in unlawful picketing: the unions now "manipulate members' ignorance of the legal process, their fears of appearing before the courts in order to achieve a settlement of the dispute. This follows not only from the law but also the reduced power of the unions as a result of the recession.

Evans thinks it is worth recording that he only found three cases where secondary pickets tried to use "sheer presence of numbers as opposed to physical aggression" to deny workers access to their jobs (my italics). Paul Wiles' interesting paper on policing industrial action unfortunately was written before the miners' dispute. However, his thesis that recent structural changes in police forces have enabled them more easily to be used as part of the Government's strategy during major strikes has largely been substantiated by the events in the coalfields.

Bestrident the other papers is Lord Wedderburn's mastery survey of recent legal developments and their underlying policy objectives. He shows, convincingly, that as a result of the Conservative Government's legislation, the collective strength of the worker is now restricted to his own employment unit. Wedderburn's faith in the ability of trade unions' responsibility to exercise their social power unfettered by the law remains undimmed. Others, like myself, who believe that the evidence suggests this faith is misplaced, will continue to argue that some legal restraints on the conduct of industrial conflict are justified.

J. M. Thomson
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BOOKS

Beyond the image

Jonathan Swift, a Hypocrite Reversed: a critical biography
by David Nokes
Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, £14.95
ISBN 0 19 812634 7

Swift makes things difficult for those who believe that biography and literary criticism must be kept apart. Literary discussion of *The Drapier's Letters* cannot proceed far without recognizing that Swift's adoption of a public role in Ireland is part of their literary character, and, equally, historical accounts of the letters cannot ignore the peculiar art which made them politically effective. One cannot analyse critically the birthday poems to Stella while disregarding their functional role in the conduct of that "violent friendship", any more than one can assess their biographical evidence without close attention to their literary method. Moreover, as a writer and as a man, Swift was consciously elusive: the writer is concealed behind many-layered irony and shifting *personae*; as life, as David Nokes observes, the man "deliberately cultivated false images of himself".

The title of what Nokes rightly calls Irvin Ehrenpreis's "monumental study", *Swift: the man, his works, and the age*, underlines the sense that personality, literary production and history are interwoven. No doubt they always are, but Swift's extraordinary force of character, his varied and unflagging mastery of language, and the importance of his public activities both in England and in Ireland make it almost impossible to deal with any one aspect in isolation. It is not easy to follow Ehrenpreis (whose tragic death last summer was a great loss to Swift studies), but Dr Nokes has different purposes and emphases and a different audience in mind. He finds most specialist approaches to Swift too narrow and partial, and most general studies too sweeping to do justice to Swift's complexity; he intends, he says, "to avoid shipwreck on the opposing rocks of pedantry or populism". His book is well-informed without being minutely detailed, lively and controversial in many of its judgements, and pleasantly readable without being superficial.

He certainly does not fall into the common biographer's trap of attempting to explain away his subject's faults or inconsistencies. On the contrary, he seems almost too ready to suspect or attribute dubious motives. On two separate occasions he accuses Swift of writing "with ringing dishonesty", though it is doubtful whether "ringing dishonesty" is very effective if "ringing". When Swift, told of

threatened violence against him, took to travelling about London by chair (though warned by Oxford that that would be no defence), Nokes says that he "covered in his rooms in Fenton Street, counting the crows the scare had cost him"; but, if he was travelling so frequently in chairs, it is hard to see what justifies "covered". When he helped the young literary aspirant, William Harrison, Nokes implies that it was because this was a "young fellow who could be trusted to spread his benefactor's virtues wherever he went"; and when, in his final illness, Harrison's mother and sisters attended him, Nokes comments, "The surrogate father who had betrayed the boy had been displaced." The "boy" was twenty-five when Swift met him, and, though the older man may have wished he could have done more for his protégé, there is nothing in the story to suggest betrayal.

These are just a few of many instances where the worst interpretation is put on Swift's behaviour. There are also frequent psychologizings, sometimes curiously old-fashioned, when Swift is discovered to have an

anal fixation.

His "loss" of both parents in infancy; his defensiveness with women; his childlike fascination with words and sounds, treating them as objects of play; his obsessive retentiveness with money; these all amount to a fairly classic case-study.

The first clause, even with its inverted commas, is oddly applied to a man whose father died before he was born and whose mother lived until he was in his forties; what is being referred to is Swift's being looked after by his nurse at Whitehaven when he was an infant. For one who was defensive with women, Swift achieved close relationships with many; there was nothing "childlike" about that fascination with words which he shared with many great writers; and although Swift was thrifty by nature and often by necessity, it seems hard to refer to the "obsessive retentiveness with money" of a man who was famous for his charities and readiness to lend money to his friends. I applaud Dr Nokes's refusal to accept all Swift's self-justifications and rationalizations at face value, but think that his scepticism is often carried to the point where he suspects the best and allows credit rather grudgingly.

There is a similar tendency in some of the critical comments. *The Virtue of St Hamet the Magician's Rod* is certainly a lampoon, but hardly "a bawdy lampoon"; the octosyllables of *Baucis and Philemon*, with their constantly varying pace and stress, are anything but "jog-trot"; Swift's *Some Advice humbly offered to the Members of the October Club* was not addressed merely to "the ale-drinking squires" - not all the members were ale-fuddled; and Swift's artful persuasion would have appealed little to those that were. The old notion that, when he wrote *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift must have been mad has long been abandoned: I had thought its replacement - that Gulliver, in the fourth book, has "a mental breakdown" so that "we are in the mind of a madman" - had also been discarded, but Dr Nokes revives it, despite the fact that it implies that all four voyages are the work of that madman. Nor is Gulliver, as Dr Nokes

asserts, of the same species as the Yahoo; the Master Houyhnhnms in the places him midway, in terms of reason, between Yahoo and Houyhnhnms, as in physical form he is midway between Lilliputian and Brobdingnagian.

However, these and other matters for disagreement are typical of the book, which tends deliberately towards the challenging and controversial rather than the accepted and bland. Dr Nokes's last sentence is worth quoting:

Only by acknowledging the ineradicable self-interest that makes each human being his own tempter, tormentor, and judge, can we live up to the challenge of Swift's honesty and humanity that must him prefer to seem a monster rather than a hypocrite.

Charles Peake

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Criseyde seeking Hector's compassion, an illustration from a 1526 edition of Chaucer's works.

more traditionally, that the *Knight's Tale* is not in the end a fable about "brightened pagans" - however much Swift's imagination would be needed to create those pagans - but one about people whose doubts and anxieties would have been the same had they been Christians. The *Knight's Tale* in short exemplifies "Renaissance broadness and daring"; it comes close to interrogating God; it would have been impossible without Italian models.

After that, though, the trail is colder. Ever since Caroline Spurgeon's *Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism* it has looked as if Chaucer's immediate successors read him very badly on every level. Spreading north that the misreadings are at least classifiable, as with Lydgate, who wants to complete Chaucer, even be Chaucer

and join the pilgrimage, and so functions as a Lacanian *testera* or link. This is a poor and unilluminating relationship, much improved on by other, more anxious and more influenced "sons" of Chaucer, such as Hoccleve, Henryson, and Skelton, all of whom, all convincingly, reimagined in terms of the literary tradition they were inventing. But on the whole the story from Lydgate on to Wyatt still seems one of degeneracy or reaction, whatever one's original bias.

There must also be some doubts about the "modernizing" aspects of this criticism. Chaucer was of course profoundly aware of diversity, even of "textuality". "Text" is a dangerous word to use of him, though, since he himself so strongly expands it to "glosses" or "ploysing" and so evidently regards glosses as fools or

charlatans. Medieval friar, modern academic? The vain and slimy mendicant in the *Summoner's Tale* certainly regards "texts" as mere material to be played with. Chaucer, I think, plays with his own in a complex parody of Pentecost; but makes it clear that his sympathies lie with "doubting Thomas" the churl, and his very red, unambiguous, and quite glossless version of the apostles "rushing mighty wind".

In other areas also reaction may still have a say. *The Roman de la Rose* is as potent a source of diversity as Renaissance Italy; there may have been Petrarchisms in England outside the Chaucerian orbit; most important, there may perhaps have been a bigger split between Chaucer and Henryson than Spurgeon (a kindly interpreter) will allow: over *Cressid* and over astrology.

Chaucer surely believed in the latter. Henryson possibly, and Henrysonians certainly, thought this justly "superstitious". But reinterpretation of *Cressid* as allegories (not fatal influences) could indeed draw a "general statement about life" from the poem of the kind that Spurgeon denies. *Cressid* was condemned by Saturn and Diana, or Kronos and the Moon, or Time and Change: so the "frostic wand" laid on her, Spenser or Bacon might have urged, is just ageing speeded up. So perish those who exploit beauty. This is a "reactionary" moral, sure enough, and not one Chaucer would have liked, but it rests on a "Renaissance" view of the planets. The arrow of change, I fear, does not always point reassuringly towards us.

T. A. Shippey

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BOOKS

Neglected genius

Ludwig Tieck: a literary biography
by Roger Paulin
Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, £32.50
ISBN 0 19 815796 7

It was Tieck's French biographer Robert Minder who once described him as "a dismembered torso in the wilderness of literary history", and it is certainly true that few literary reputations have suffered such extremes of fluctuation as his. If his contemporaries, both at home and abroad, were over-impressed by his industry as an original, that cannot explain the marked decline in his critical fortunes since his death in 1853.

At the turn of the 19th century in Germany he stood in the estimate of many reputed authorities but a pace or two behind Goethe himself, and was hailed on the letter's death in 1832 as having "succeeded by divine right to the vacant throne of genius." Today his name will be associated almost exclusively with that of August Wilhelm Schlegel as co-translator and editor of the most highly regarded German version of Shakespeare's works, and little else. Posterity has indeed been slow to reach a realistic assessment of his creative and theoretical contribution to the development of German literary Romanticism, and neither the biographers nor the editors can be said to have served him well.

Born in 1773 in Berlin, the son of a bookseller, Tieck evinced from his earliest days a passion for books which grew quickly from merely reading to writing them, if necessary in any mode that his schoolteacher sponsors might require. As a student in Halle, Göttingen and Erlangen his nominal pursuit of theology quickly gave way to the serious pursuit of literature, while his proto-Lutheran background hardly prepared him for the aesthetic experience of the south's baroque Catholicism, which was to add a completely new sensual dimension to his emotional life. While still a student he felt a tumultuous commitment to the only actor he was ever to know, that of the professional writer, and his translation of *The Tempest* and his study of Shakespeare's treatment of the supernatural foreshadowed his consuming and lifelong literary preoccupation with Elizabethan English literature. The chief stations of his life were



Ludwig Tieck, by Franz Krüger

against tradition.

One Brecht poem that is frequently anthologized but is not one of those that Dr Whitaker elects to analyse is a marvellously controlled sonnet dating from the mid-1920s, which recaptures the surge of feeling prompted when the poet notices a strand of grey in the hair of a young woman with whom he has just spent the night - a reworking of the theme (perception of transience linked to the *carpe diem* idea) that belongs to the basic stock of the European love sonnet since the 16th century. Both the thematic traditionalism and the adoption of a traditional form, within which Brecht knowingly deploys a crisply economic style, are typical of his work. He was indeed one of the modern adepts of the German sonnet, and it is a limitation of Dr Whitaker's book that the sonnets are mentioned only in passing.

His aim, however, is to switch the focus of critical interest away from Brecht's early poetry. The poet he presents is fundamentally a political one. One of the projects he treats at length and with most evident enjoyment is an uncompleted didactic poem of 1945 on the "nature of man". The Lucretian echo in the title signals a variation on a theme: for Brecht, what is central in the nature of things is man's relation to the organization of society and to the materialist conception of history. Composed in hexameters, the least in rather loose hexameters, the poem was designed round two central canons conceived as verifications of parts of the Communist Manifesto. By focusing on mankind at work, it offers a materialist account of the human lot, allowing, as Dr Whitaker puts it, both a "dynamic definition of human nature" and a contrasting picture of the present unnatural, inhuman condi-

found greater critical honour outside his own country, notably in the studies of the American E. H. Zeydel (1935) and the Frenchman Robert Minder (1936), whose major contributions have provided many of the starting-points for Tieck research over the past fifty years.

This increasing critical interest in Tieck has preferred in the main to concentrate upon the more easily encompassable genre and thematic studies in the face of the formidable challenge represented by the magnitude and diversity of the collected works. In accepting this challenge, Roger Paulin presents the result as a "literary biography", in which the course of Tieck's long and productive life is mapped out by reference to the major landmarks of his creativity.

After a convincing account of the derivative first schoolboy efforts, his development is traced through *William Lovell to Franz Stenbalds Wanderungen*, still more talked about than read, but the novel which first established his name and characterized through its inwardness, enthusiasm and apotheosis of German art the spirit of the Romantic movement. Here as elsewhere, the critical assessment is placed within the framework of the lively and often facetious mood of the times. It is a constant strength of the work that Paulin is at pains to relate Tieck's literary and private life to the comings and goings, the wheelings and dealings, of those both famous and obscure whose names fit so frequently and elusively through the memoirs and correspondence of the time.

No name dominates Tieck's life more completely than that of Shakespeare. From the first acquaintance as a child, through his research at Göttingen, the translations, the contempt for the earlier, especially English commentators, Tieck's fascination was lifelong. Paulin offers as exhaustive an account as we can hope for of the all-pervading impact of Shakespeare upon Tieck's approach to the task of the dramatist, the role of the theatre, the style of the actor, but above all to the nature and mystery of poetic genius.

This is a well-written volume which absorbs, orders and refines the mass of scattered contemporary and posthumous documentation about Tieck's life and works, and which coordinates and evaluates the many loose strands of Tieck scholarship. The English translations of all original quotations will make it accessible to the non-specialist, while the copious index and register of sources make it an invaluable work of reference.

James Trainer

James Trainer is professor of German and deputy principal of the University of Stirling.

Against tradition

Brecht's Poetry: a critical study
by Peter Whitaker
Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, £19.50
ISBN 0 19 815541 7

Some twenty years ago, when Brecht was described in Patrick Bridgwater's Penguin anthology *Twentieth-Century German Verse* as being "primarily a poet", the judgement seemed surprising; his copious output of lyrical and reflective verse had largely been obscured by his international reputation as a dramatist. The powerful productions of his own Berliner Ensemble answered the urgent postwar need for a major classic of the German stage, and at the same time attracted attention to his theoretical writings on the theatre.

In fact the various devices on which the distinctive Brechtian style was based were for the most part not particularly innovative in themselves but were founded in international theatrical tradition, as Brecht himself well knew. Thanks to the vigour and suppleness of his writing, his stature as a lyric poet (of a mainly epigrammatic kind) has increasingly been recognized; and we can see that his awareness of tradition - an ability to manipulate and adapt traditional elements - is fundamentally characteristic of his writing. It is there in the language of his major plays, not least in biblical resonance. It is there in his lyrics also. He was essentially a writer

sons under which most people live". Dr Whitaker argues that the "materialist aesthetic" is "implicit in Brecht's poetry from the early thirties onwards". This reading provides an interpretative framework within which he takes us through Brecht's development from the sceptical and aggressively anti-metaphysical early work to the poetic functionalism of the mid-twenties, the abstract theoretical texts that followed in the early thirties, and the increasingly epigrammatic poetry of Brecht's later years, from his exile onwards.

He succeeds in conveying a clear sense of development in Brecht's poetic intentions, though rather less sense of the range of influences on his work, which the range of influences on his work, which the method and organization of the argument, and sometimes the language too, betray that the book derives from a dissertation; especially in the early chapters, it is heavy with references to other scholars, and there is a persistent emphasis on categorizing the poems in groups and sub-groups. Not all good lines make exciting books: in this one, some of the academic perhaps have been lured away before publication, without any sacrifice of scholarship.

As it is, it may not capture many new readers for Brecht's poetry; but it does provide a systematic account, which engages knowledgeably with previous criticism, and it will take its place among required reading on Brecht's work.

W. E. Yates

W. E. Yates is professor of German at the University of Exeter.

Under the influence

D. H. Lawrence and Tradition
edited by Jeffrey Meyers
Athlone Press, £18.00
ISBN 0 485 11260 4

In the introduction to this collection of essays Jeffrey Meyers argues that Lawrence, far from being a writer who, in T. S. Eliot's words, "started life wholly free from any restriction of tradition or institution" was in contact with a culture both wide and nourishing. Nor does Meyers accept, without very considerable qualification, the theories about "anxiety of influence" associated with Walter Jackson Bate and Harold Bloom. Lawrence quarrelled with many of his predecessors, and he might well be thought to have misread or misinterpreted some of them as a conscious, or unconscious, way of riding himself of their influence, but he was also indebted to them both for inspiration, and for ideas and examples on which he could build his own original contribution to literature.

The individual essays deal with seven major influences: Blake, Carlyle, Ruskin, George Eliot, Hardy,

Whitman and Nietzsche. Some of these were mainly "philosophical" sources, providing a storehouse of ideas which Lawrence found congenial or uncongenial, and could therefore adopt or refute in ways that were stimulating to his combative intelligence. Thus Paul Delany shows Lawrence both in sympathy with, and reaction from, the notions of Carlyle. The principle of hero-worship, for example, was something which appealed to the anti-democratic streak in Lawrence, but which, he modified in his "leadership novels" to produce a hero "whose potency is as much sensual as political". Similarly, the Carlylean "nostalgia for the old hierarchical, organic or 'face-to-face' society" made a strong appeal to Lawrence; but whereas Carlyle saw a possibility for this to develop in conjunction with industrialism, Lawrence - anticipating, Delany suggests, the political "green parties" of today - found the organic and the industrial incompatible. Robert W. French, on the other hand, insists on the acceptance by Lawrence of many of Whitman's leading ideas, despite the "false exuberance" which he so much detested. In Whitman he recognized a man "breaking a way ahead", whose emphasis on the primacy of the living present, and willingness not only to proclaim the importance of sexuality but also to extend it beyond heterosexuality, was temperamentally as well as

intellectually congenial. French brackets Lawrence and Whitman along with Blake as "prophets", driven men whose words seem "prompted by some force beyond human limitations", and he appears to approve of the rapid utterances which result. In the main this is likewise true of John Colmer on "Lawrence and Blake", though Colmer appraises their relationship more coolly; and he argues the case for their belonging to a common prophetic tradition instead of seeking to identify particular examples of influence. The view, however, taken by Kingsley Widmer, however, that Lawrence's debt to Nietzsche is a good deal more ambiguous. Lawrence, and by so doing encourages "misestimations" of his cultural role. Proper understanding, we are told, requires consideration of him as "a different prophet, belonging to a different and darker matrix of sensibility". We are led, therefore, to expect an analysis which will place Lawrence's achievement in a more revealing international or cosmopolitan context. What follows, however, is a rapid survey of the complicated mixture of acceptance, rejection, modification and misrepresentation in Lawrence's attitudes to Nietzsche and Nietzschean thought, with a somewhat partial assessment of the novels, in which

denunciation of their egotism, perversion and compulsive "mystagogy" becomes the dominant note. The judgement which finally emerges is that Lawrence is at his best in those novels like *Sons and Lovers* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, and in some of the stories and descriptive writings, which relate only distantly to Nietzsche. On the whole, then, this particular dimension of prophecy is one that seems to have been a disaster for Lawrence, and we turn with relief to other traditions that had a saner influence on him. The essays on Ruskin, George Eliot and Hardy undertake more limited tasks. George P. Landow demonstrates what Lawrence learnt from Ruskin's techniques of natural description, and H. M. Daleski confines himself to specific ways in which the fiction of George Eliot, and notably *The Mill on the Floss*, helped to shape both the form and content of *The White Peacock*. None the less, Daleski is perhaps the most satisfying contribution. His comparison of Maggie Tulliver's relationship with Philip and Stephen and that of Lettie with Leslie and George usefully illuminates both Lawrence's novel and George Eliot's; and his suggestion that the latter part of *The White Peacock* is a response to Nietzsche's continuation of where George Eliot left off in *The Mill on the Floss* gives the notion of "tradition" an interestingly creative dimension.

R. P. Draper

R. P. Draper is professor of English at the University of Aberdeen.

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BOOKS

Do objects exist?

The Refutation of Skepticism
by A. C. Grayling
Duckworth, £18.00
ISBN 0 7156 1922 5

For much of the 20th century, philosophers interested in scepticism have concentrated upon whether we can know, or have any reason to believe, that ordinary physical objects exist independently of us and continue to do so while unperceived. Since none of us seriously pretends to doubt that there are such things, it has often seemed that these philosophers do not view scepticism as a serious philosophical challenge: their writings have the character of routine analysis or intellectual games. The philosophers' standard defence of their procedure was that attention to these puzzles helps us to identify the deep-rooted misconceptions about justification and reality underlying apparently sound sceptical arguments. In the face of ritual denunciations of misconceptions which do not seem very interesting, this standard defence can seem unconvincing: much epistemology from the 1960s and 1970s paid little attention to the challenge of scepticism.

A fresh concern with scepticism in recent years has several sources. The work of Thompson (Clarke), Stanley Cavell and Barrie Storr suggests depths in the sceptical arguments which escape the standard responses. A growing philosophical concern with the history of the subject has discovered more in sceptical discussions than a concern with whether there is an external world; and has discredited attempts to attribute the appeal of scepticism to naive misconceptions about mind and reality. A central concern is with the extent to which we can achieve a transparent self-consciousness about how we know as much as we do. Some 17th-century sceptics advocated a fiducial approach to religion; must we hold a similar view of the search for knowledge?

Grayling's ambitious book focuses entirely upon scepticism about whether there is an external world, and offers little detailed analysis of sceptical arguments: he does not really take scepticism seriously and wants us to share this attitude. But, in his response, he brings together several themes that have been prominent in recent discussion. One of these is what he calls naturalism, which is reflected in the "Humean shrug": maybe the sceptical arguments cannot be refuted, but they may be ignored because our nature compels belief in external objects.

This is itself a sceptical response, since it suggests that we cannot understand what *entitles* us to do so. The other themes attempt to defuse those sceptical implications. The first employs a verificationist or "anti-realist" theory of meaning, and argues that the

structure of our conceptual scheme is such that we can only apply concepts to our experience at all by relying upon a deep-seated or "transcendental" belief that there are physical objects. The second borrows an argument of Davidson's to defeat the sceptical challenge that claims about our conceptual scheme prove nothing since alternative frameworks may make equal or better sense of experience. Although these arguments do not prove that there are external objects, and thus do not refute scepticism about them, they are supposed to lend support or legitimacy to the Humean shrug. The idea appears to be that we cannot form the idea of how things are independent of the only possible conceptual framework and the physical object concepts it employs in order to ask the question whether our framework is indeed adequate to them.

Grayling is not alone in being attracted to this philosophical project. Unfortunately, his arguments are neither penetrating nor clear, and he makes little contribution to the detailed analysis that is required for the project to be evaluated. The unsatisfactory organization of the volume reflects its origin in a doctoral dissertation: much relevant introductory material is tucked away in a series of appendices; and many allusions to the literature call for a philosophical sophistication which will be beyond many potential readers.

Christopher Hookway

Dr Hookway is lecturer in philosophy at the University of Birmingham.

The real Descartes

Descartes
by Marjorie Grene
Harvester Press, £25.00
ISBN 0 7108 0571 3

The Harvester "Philosophers in Context" series, which to date includes volumes on Plato, Locke and Leibniz, aims to offer "a systematic exposition and critical assessment of the main philosophical arguments of each philosopher" and also to "establish why the philosopher was important in his own time". Marjorie Grene's volume on Descartes signally fails to fulfil the first of these aims. So far from expounding Descartes' principal arguments, the author from the beginning presupposes a thorough and detailed acquaintance with them on the part of the reader.

What Grene offers us, in fact, is a collection of largely disconnected essays on specific issues in Cartesian philosophy (ideas and judgements in the Third Meditation; Descartes' notion of hypothesis in science; the theory of the passions and its relation to Descartes' treatment of animals; and the Cartesian concept of substance). In so far as there is a connecting theme, it is the author's unflagging admiration for modern French Cartesian scholarship, as against its Anglo-Saxon counterpart where, she tells us, the "real Descartes" is often "simply left aside altogether".

Perhaps the most fashionable notion which Grene borrows from the French interpreters of Descartes is the idea of Cartesian science as a *code*. "Science is a code for putting into figured form what perception has disclosed. But codes are artefacts; in this sense, at least, science is a made thing, a fiction... We devise (figure out) [sic] a code for refiguring our sense-experiences back into the terms of nature's code."

I am not sure how far Jean-Luc Marion, whose *La Théologie Blanche de Descartes* is the acknowledged source of inspiration here, would welcome this presentation of his views. At all events, Grene's version appears wildly to distort Descartes' conception of science. It is true that in the case of "secondary" qualities (like colours) arbitrary, not a natural, relation between our sensations and the genuine properties of objects; so in this context talk of codes, or of the analogy between a sign and what is signified may be appropriate, indeed there are hints of it in Descartes himself. But in Cartesian physics, which is confined to

"primary" qualities such as shapes, sizes and motions, Descartes maintains that our geometrical descriptions directly record true properties of the real extended universe. So the talk of "figuring" and "encoding" seems highly misleading here; and even more misleading is the reference to Cartesian science as a "fiction" (later, with false Gallic insouciance, Grene informs us that it is a "fictional account which... we know to be true").

Both here and in many other places, Grene's favoured interpretations seem both quirky and ill-supported by the Cartesian texts. For example, we are told that Descartes's quest was not a search for true judgements; rather he wished to abandon the "way of judgement" entirely and replace it with the "way of ideas". Yet Descartes himself unequivocally states that clear and distinct perception "serves as the basis for certain and indubitable judgement". We are also told that in Descartes's early work, the *Rules*, deduction disappears leaving only the "step by step course along the paving stones of Cartesian intuition". But to make this plausible, one would have to make much more effort than Grene does to explain away those passages where deduction is presented as a dialectic "mode of knowing", with quite different characteristics from intuition. Again, Grene tells us that Descartes's use of hypotheses in science is characteristic of "relatively popular" works such as the *Essays*, where there is an "absence of the proper grounding in first principles that would remove their tentative character". Yet in book three of the *Principles of Philosophy*, a non-popular work which aims to provide the fullest possible grounding for science, Descartes accords a crucial and inescapable role to hypotheses.

In the second half of the book, Grene aims to provide a "view of Descartes in his own time" by sifting through the criticisms made by the authors of the 1641 *Objections to the Meditations* (Mersenne, Gassendi, Arnauld). Some interesting points emerge here, but in the main Grene's analysis is distorted by her relentless hostility to Descartes whom she repeatedly lambasts with the hackneyed charge of "alienating the modern mind from nature". This hostility leads her in a chapter on "Descartes and the School" to hand out lavish bouquets to Descartes's scholastic critics for their "robust realism" and "common sense". Yet a balanced account of the 17th-century context surely requires a far more searching look at the entrenched obscurantism and authoritarianism of the world-view which Descartes was striving to overthrow.

J. G. Cottingham

Dr Cottingham is lecturer in philosophy at the University of Reading.

BOOKS

At the county level

Recovery and Restoration in an English County: Devon local administration 1646-1670
by Stephen K. Roberts
University of Exeter Press, £9.95
ISBN 0 8399 246 8

Dr Roberts begins his book by concentrating yet another county study of a 17th-century needs some justification. In fact, although his work does investigate an area in which many of the issues are very familiar, it also possesses two relatively novel dimensions.

First, Roberts does not limit his investigations to the justices of the peace (he is properly sceptical about the notion of a "county community" of the gentry) but extends his researches to the inferior officers: those high constables, bailiffs, jurors and petty constables upon whom so much of the local administration of the period depended. Secondly, he extends his enquiries beyond 1660, and grapples with the problems attendant upon the restoration of the Stuart monarchy at a local level. This latter decision is an especially welcome one. Although Roberts's treatment of a number of the relevant issues is superficial (one would have liked to have read more about the re-establishment of the local courts, for example, and of the Restoration militia) he demonstrates convincingly that post-Restoration developments should not just be regarded as an appendage to the much studied trends of the 1640s and 1650s.

What happened in local administration at local politics after 1660 is a largely neglected area, and this book highlights the need for an expansion of research into both the 1640s and the immediately following decades. Roberts develops a formidable knowledge of local records and local personalities. He traces the administration of the county through the changing regimes of 1646-1660 into the brave new world of the Restoration. His findings are not always surprising; the major generals were less innovative than has sometimes been supposed; the Act of 1650 against various sexual offences was not very vigorously enforced; the Restoration justices were a higher social standing than their interregnum counterparts. Conversely, he does tease out a number of peculiarities: the 1650 Act was probably enforced more stringently in Devon than in most other counties, whereas the keepers of unlicensed alehouses got off more lightly, for example. Above all, he shows how every regime was forced, to a greater or lesser extent, to depend heavily upon such human materials as were available. In particular, his account of local administration in the 1660s provides a number of fascinating insights into the way in which supporters of the restored Stuarts had to cooperate with survivors of the 1650s, often displaying militant attitudes in their treatment of local government problems.

Perhaps the greatest criticism of this book is that its author's grasp falters when he extends his gaze beyond the boundaries of Devon. Roberts's work is based upon a doctoral thesis completed in 1980, the rewriting of which, on the strength of the acknowledged debts, was completed late in 1984. Yet innovative sections, from a failure to allow a number of published and unpublished works, notably some completed between his thesis examination and the rewriting. His treatment of parish officers, of the punishment of sexual offenders, and of the development of the house of correction would have been strengthened if he had mined more widely through this secondary material. The reader of this book is left with a feeling that Devonian trees have obscured the view of some more broadly spreading thickets of wood.

J. A. Sharpe

J. A. Sharpe is lecturer in history at the University of York.



"Early Morning" (1825), a pen and brush study by Samuel Palmer, taken from a new book by Raymond Lister *Paintings of Samuel Palmer* (Cambridge University Press, £17.50).

Early farmers

Prehistoric Farming in Europe
by Graeme Barker
Cambridge University Press, £27.50
and £9.95
ISBN 0 521 22810 7 and 26969 5

The adoption of farming is one of the turning points in European history and in some areas resulted in a pattern of settlement which has lasted for thousands of years. Agricultural expansion contributed to some of the main changes in prehistoric society, from the growth of the Minoan palaces to the building of British hill-forts, but however familiar these ideas are today, the beginnings of farming remain something of a mystery. All too often references to the "spread" of agriculture or to the inexorable migration of the farmers themselves from the East Mediterranean to Scandinavia. As one writer commented, "it is often hard to avoid the impression... that early farming was like some kind of margarine or rising damp, that eventually, and somewhat mysteriously, managed to cover most of Europe".

A few years ago a major research project on the origins of agriculture was mounted by the British Academy under the direction of the late Eric Higgs. This excellent book is an indirect result of that project, for its author, now the director of the British School in Rome, was one of a generation of students whose work formed its core. First, they rejected the idea of a "Neolithic revolution", preferring to see the origins of agriculture in the increasingly specialized relationships between the human population and its food supply during the late glacial and early postglacial periods; agriculture could have developed gradually, as the economy of hunter-gatherers recovered from the devastation of the last ice age.

This book is chiefly remarkable for its marshalling of complex and often inaccessible material, and this can hardly be faulted. It is a real achievement in its breadth of coverage and range of reference. When it was first announced, it was difficult to see how one author could tackle such a broad theme with any coherence, and it is impressive that what Barker calls this "foolhardy task" has been accomplished at all. I doubt whether this ambitious undertaking will have any competitors.

Richard Bradley

Richard Bradley is reader in archaeology at the University of Reading.

Neolithic societies

Neolithic Europe: a survey
by Alasdair Whittle
Cambridge University Press, £27.50
and £9.95
ISBN 0 521 24799 3 and 28970 X

The European Neolithic has long fascinated prehistorians because it marked the replacement of hunting and gathering by agriculture. The last major synthesis of this complex and often protracted process was Gordon Childe's *The Dawn of European Civilisation*, first published in 1925 and thereafter with minor revisions for the next 30 years. Since then, scholars have shied away from similar attempts: there is far too much poor data and too little of good quality; material is published in languages as diverse as Polish and Portuguese; and there is too little agreement these days as to how evidence for subsistence, colonization, social organization and the like should be assessed. Instead, the tendency has been for either detailed case-studies of individual regions or thematic approaches that focus on one topic, such as agriculture, at the expense of the rest.

Whittle has tried to emulate Childe in showing the European Neolithic in its entirety. He starts with a review of

the (mesolithic) hunter-gatherer societies up to when agriculture was first adopted in south-east Europe around 6000 BC and then traces the appearance of the earliest Neolithic societies throughout Europe up to about 4000 BC. The rest of the book covers in three long chapters the way in which these societies developed down to about 2000 BC, by which time many of them were highly complex in their land-use, social organization, exchange systems and ideology.

On the positive side, Whittle should be praised for his perseverance in coping with a mass of excavation reports and regional surveys published in a dozen languages; and sympathized with for wrestling with a database that ranges from the (occasionally) good to the (frequently) gorbly. Time and time again, he has to use excavation reports showing that what should have been a routine and informative operation was little short of academic gorging; not surprisingly, the book contains innumerable litanyes to the effect that basic data on chronology, subsistence and context are lacking.

He has also to contend with a complexity of theoretical issues in the way that Childe did not. In those more straightforward days, few disputed that agriculture was introduced into Europe by near eastern immigrants; there seemed to be a direct connection between the type of pots people used and their ethnic identity; and the status of the living seemed directly measurable by the grave goods with which they were buried. These days, none of these (and other) assumptions can be taken for granted, and Whittle has often to admit that even if the evidence was good enough, there would still be no clear-cut way of explaining it.

So what of the end result, given materials that are so often defective and the fact that there is so much dissent over what to do with them? In so far as the book shows the complexity of the Neolithic both across Europe and down to 2000 BC, and the inadequacy of simple explanations, the book is clearly a success. Similarly, the book succeeds admirably in showing how much we do not know or understand. On the other hand, it is definitely not an introduction to the subject. It is an invaluable source of reference, if you know what to look for, but presupposes a lot of background knowledge. Much of the material in it struck me as trivial rather than significant; I would have preferred to see less description and more discussion of specific themes.

Overall, this book provides an extremely valuable account of all the trees in the forest (not to mention the undergrowth and dead wood); for a view of what the wood is like, I would go elsewhere.

R. W. Dennell

Robin Dennell is senior lecturer in the department of archaeology and prehistory at the University of Sheffield.

The *Liste Letters*, as abridged by Bridget Boland from Muriel St Clare Byrne's six-volume edition, is now available in paperback form. The abridged version contains 340 letters, and retains much of Muriel St Clare Byrne's commentary. It is published by Penguin at £4.95.

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Early thoughts on being

History of the Concept of Time: "Prolegomena"
by Martin Heidegger
translated by Theodore Kisiel
Indiana University Press, \$38.50
ISBN 0 253 32834 9

The present volume is a transcription of Heidegger's 1925 lecture course at the University of Marburg, "History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena to a phenomenology of history and nature". In both the German and the English versions the word "prolegomena" has been removed to the main title, since the lecture course never got as far as its proper theme - time. However, two factors guarantee the book's importance: first, in it Heidegger's response to Husserl receives its most detailed treatment; and second, it comprises the first draft of Heidegger's principal work, *Being and Time*.

In a long "preliminary part", Heidegger offers a critical exposition of Husserl's notions of "categorical intuition" and "intentionality". Husserl's phenomenology of consciousness, because it is rooted in the subjectivist tradition, fails to inquire into the being of intentional acts, especially of those acts that cannot appeal to the evidence of perception. In all this Heidegger discovers "two fundamental oversights": in transcendental phenomenology: "On the one hand, the question of the being of this specific being, of the act, is neglected; on the other, we have the neglect of the question of the sense of being itself". Yet neglect of the meaning of *Sein* requires that phenomenology become fundamental ontology, taking as its principal task a temporal analysis of *Dasein*. In *Being and Time*.

However, 1925 is not 1927: several crucial elements of Heidegger's magnum opus are missing from this "first draft". As mentioned above, the course never reaches the topic of time as such; the analysis of temporality in the second division of *Being and Time* are altogether absent here. The very word *ecstasis*, Heidegger's term for the three dimensions of time, fails to appear. "Dasein is time", says the final section of this *Prolegomena*, yet how this is so remains a mystery until 1927. The upshot is that the notion of "ecstatic temporality" occurs

to Heidegger quite late on the path that led him to *Being and Time*. Furthermore, the related notion of "existential" ontology, of Dasein as *Existenz*, is absent from the first draft. Translator Theodore Kisiel, who managed to examine Heidegger's handwritten lecture notes themselves, insists that when "existence"-related words appear in the present book they do so as emendations Heidegger made after the lecture course had been delivered; in other words, Heidegger's "existentialism" emerged only as he was preparing the final version of the manuscript of *Being and Time* for the printer. One could tabulate a whole series of such differences between first draft and final product: the language in 1925 is far more Husserlian than it is in 1927; there is nothing in the first draft that corresponds to the detailed treatment of "truth" in section 44 of *Being and Time*; and - the notion of "anxiety" in 1925 remains subordinate to the concept of "uncanniness", *Unheimlichkeit*, the very concept that is so central in Heidegger's later thought.

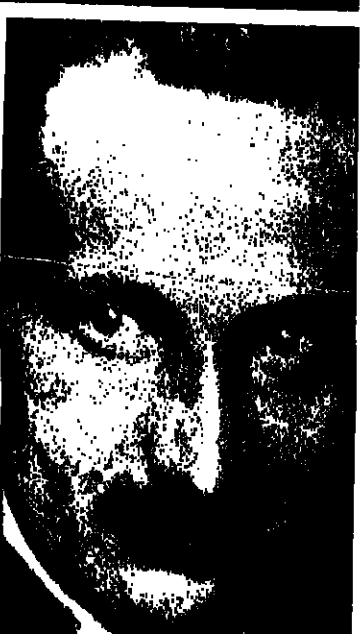
These important differences do not always emerge from the *Prolegomena* as clearly as they should. For the German edition of Heidegger's lectures (published by Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt) far from being a critical edition, fails to distinguish between Heidegger's holographs, the later typed collations, and the stenographic and non-stenographic student notes. The resulting confusion as regards the genesis of the term "existence" has already been cited. But in the German edition, in 1925 remains a German volume. (His translation silently corrects the errors and supplies the omissions.)

The German publisher has felt obliged to tuck away an errata list in one of the recently released *Gesamtausgabe* volumes, without however citing the American translator who discovered the errors. One must hope that the ironic outcome - the fact that the English version of *History of the Concept of Time* is phenomenologically superior to its German original - will induce Heidegger's literary executors and German publisher to grant other scholars access to Heidegger's papers. At all events, Indiana University Press and Theodore Kisiel have overcome considerable obstacles in producing this fascinating piece of "early Heidegger".

David Farrell Krell

Dr Farrell Krell is senior lecturer in philosophy at the University of Essex.

Correction
In last week's *THES*, the title of Yvonne Jacobson's book *Passing Friends* was printed erroneously as *Passing Friends*. The book is published by William F. Kaufmann at £43.95.



Martin Heidegger

Creative concepts

The Intellectual Development of Karl Mannheim: culture, politics and planning
by Colin Loader
Cambridge University Press, £22.50
ISBN 0 521 26567 3

Karl Mannheim has frequently been the target of abuse, both intellectual and political. In his short life (1893-1947), his political involvements forced him to move from his native Hungary in 1919, and from Germany to England in 1933. Since his death, Mannheim's intellectual reputation has been ill-treated. He is often regarded as a debater who picked up ideological problems only to leave them unsolved. His changes of mind and apparent self-contradictions are seen as symptoms of an inconsistent sociological sensibility. Lastly, his attempts at the end of his life to provide social and political prescriptions for the ills of society have been presented as slightly dotty ramblings.

This reputation is quite undeserved. Mannheim was not a systematic thinker, but he was a very creative sociologist who could see the interesting problems and who had an enviable capacity to put together ideas coming from naturally different intellectual contexts. Fortunately there has been some rehabilitation of his reputation of late; and that is the contribution, I think, of this book. It is a book that has appeared to date. Thorough and scholarly, it manages to clarify some of the obscurities in Mannheim's work. It also draws on a wide range of material, and is the only work that I know to use Mannheim's unpublished play to illustrate his thinking on cultural theory.

For Dr Loader, Mannheim's career consists of three main stages, each of which is dominated by a "centre of construction": a "centre of construction", and, in addition, two transitional phases, characterised by the weakening of one centre of construction and the preparation for another. Each of these transitions gave prominence to new conceptual elements which created a tension with the old centre of construction and led eventually to the production of a new. In turn, Loader attempts to relate Mannheim's thought to the three sociological groups in which he participated, the Budapest intelligentsia, the German academic community in the Weimar Republic, and refugee intellectuals in Britain.

In the first stage (1910-1924), the centre of construction was the concept of a cultural philosophy. This comprised a statement of the problem, the breakdown of traditional schemes of meaning, a methodological instrument, namely a technique for the interpretation of world-view, and a solution, which was a new cultural philosophy able to provide orientation. In the transitional stage following (1924-1928), Mannheim clearly became increasingly uneasy with the structure, and moved towards a new centre, theory of politics and political science. The new element which energised this transition was the sociology of knowledge which related knowledge to society via the identification of

world-views, and of the creation of such views and their material interests.

The second centre of construction, the second centre of construction, is dated by Loader to 1929, the year of publication of Mannheim's best known work, *Ideology and Utopia*. Loader argues that this book has been mistakenly interpreted as simply about the sociology of knowledge; it is rather about the role of politics in the "making" of the world. The political centre of construction does not, however, last long. A new period of transition started in 1930, before Mannheim's flight to England. The disruptive element here was Mannheim's conviction that an undesirable mass-culture was developing in Europe. Under the impact of this force, political solutions were no longer so easily promulgated. Mannheim began to develop a theory of planning which became the centre of construction of the last stage from 1938 to 1947. Planning depended on a democratic consensus of values which Mannheim found to be present in Britain.

In the last stage, Mannheim provides an excellent account of Mannheim's work. His strategy of delineating conceptual centres of construction admirably presents Mannheim as the creative and experimental thinker that he was while simultaneously showing that his changes of direction were by no means arbitrary.

Nicholas Abercrombie

Dr Abercrombie is senior lecturer in sociology at the University of Lancaster.

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BOOKS

COMPUTER STUDIES

A raw computer

Memoirs of a Computer Pioneer

by Maurice Wilkes

MIT Press, £19.95

ISBN 0 262 23123 0

Computers are now everywhere and a great deal of the working of what is conventionally called the 'civilized' world has become completely dependent on these artefacts. Moreover, the breadth and depth of their penetration is increasing all the time, and their potential powers seem limitless.

There were no computers in the modern sense of the term 40 years ago, so this extraordinary development has taken place in a very short time.

It all started with a few key people working in a very small number of places in Britain and the United States.

Maurice Wilkes was one of them and without any doubt must be counted among the pioneers of the computer age.

These memoirs give an intensely personal and very readable account of how he came to be involved with the computer and what he contributed to its development.

The full descriptive name of what we now call simply the computer is "stored program digital electronic computer" - "digital" because numbers, letters and whatever other symbols it operates on are represented by streams of discrete electrical pulses; "stored program" because the set of operations (the "program") that it must perform in order to do any required task, like calculating the safe load on a girder, updating a bank account or booking an airline flight, are also represented by groups of pulses and are held inside the machine along with the data on which they act. All this is explained in the book.

The world's first working computer was not a stored-program machine. This was the Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer (ENIAC) - designed and built in the Moore School of Electrical Engineering in the University of Pennsylvania, originally for the special purpose of ballistic calculations for the United States Army; it was working in 1945. ENIAC's speed of calculation was staggering for the time, about a thousand times that of hand calculation (now even moderately-rated computers run a thousand times faster than that). But the numbers and the operations that it needed had to be given to the machine by a slow and laborious process of setting possibly hundreds of hand switches. It was a remarkable achievement, an engineering tour de force as Wilkes says, but its designers Presper Eckert and John Mauchly saw even then that this was not the way to go. To quote Wilkes, "they began to realize that, by application of logical principles and the adoption of a more subtle approach, there was a possibility that a computer of even greater power could be built with a fraction of the amount of equipment."

Together with the famous John von Neumann, they worked out the principles on which the development of a modern computer was to be based and laid these out in a document which appeared under the name of von Neumann and the title "Draft report on the EDVAC" - their name for the machine they proposed to build.

Wilkes saw a copy of this in May 1946 and "recognized this at once as the real thing, and from that time on never had any doubt as to the way computer development would go". He was then Director of the University Mathematical Laboratory at Cambridge and in that position was responsible for providing computing services to support research workers. All computing was then done on hand-operated desk machines or other mechanical devices; but the news of ENIAC coming across the Atlantic alerted Wilkes, and others, to the possibilities of electronics.

Although he does not say so explicitly, it seems a reasonable inference that the EDVAC report provided the impetus that started him on the path that led to the building in Cambridge of one of the world's first stored-program computers.

The importance of this book is that it gives a first-hand account of the development of one of the historic computers. Actually only about half deals with computer matters. The first nine chapters describe childhood and adolescence (Wilkes was born in 1913), undergraduate years at Cambridge followed by postgraduate research there, and then, at fair length and with a good deal of scientific and anecdotal detail, war-time scientific work - very largely on radar. This is all easy reading and is followed by interesting accounts of two "official" visits to Germany very shortly after the end of the war in Europe as part of the Allies' investigation of Germany's scientific activities. Though of general interest, all this seems to me to be of less importance than the computer chapters; but what it does show is how Wilkes became thoroughly familiar, through this radar work, with electronic circuitry - on a very practical as well as a theoretical level.

Wilkes read mathematics at Cambridge but already had a deep interest in the physical sciences and a liking for practical work; of his postgraduate research, on atmospheric physics, he says: "I look forward to being able to apply the mathematics I had learnt to physical problems but, in the meantime, I wanted to establish myself as an experimentalist." He had been something of a radio "ham" at school, so he had an early interest in electronics. The upshot was that when he saw the EDVAC report, he was particularly well equipped not only to appreciate the possibilities that were being opened up but to see how these could be realized in a practical way. He had the good fortune to spend August and September of 1946 in America, includ-

ing and in 1951 made their experience available in a famous book *The Preparation of Programs for an Electronic Digital Computer* (recently republished by MIT Press). Authored by M. V. Wilkes, D. J. Wheeler and S. Gill, this was the first book on computer programming - always known simply as Wilkes, Wheeler and Gill. Before that, Wilkes had started a series of seminars on alternative matters. These too, held on alternate Thursdays in Cambridge's Maths Lab, became famous. Indeed, it is an interesting reflection that for some years the entire British computing community gathered together in a single medium-sized lecture room. As one who attended most of them, I can pay a personal tribute to their interest and value.

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The computer pioneers, like all pioneers, were strong-minded people with clear ideas of their own and a firm determination to put these into practice and not anyone else's. If they hadn't been like that, they wouldn't have achieved what they did. It was not surprising that they didn't always see eye to eye with each other. Wilkes, despite a quiet manner, was no exception and has no hesitation in saying how and why he disagreed with others - including, for example, Alan Turing. But he is generous in his assessment of others and in his recognition of the contribution they made. His own contribution has been recognized by a whole string of honours - Fellow of the Royal Society in 1956 (the first computer FRS), Cambridge professor in 1965, distinguished fellow of the British Computer Society in 1973, election to the United States Academy of Sciences in 1980, and numerous honorary degrees. These memoirs give me at least the impression that he has always found life interesting, rewarding and enjoyable.

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BOOKS

COMPUTER STUDIES

Modelling processes

Communicating Sequential Processes

by C.A.R. Hoare

Penguin, £27.95

ISBN 0 13 153271 5

Computers are getting smaller and cheaper. To take advantage of the continuing reductions in the size and cost of computing hardware, the computer industry must now develop new methods of producing large amounts of reliable software. Fast. Software is a matter of notation - notation which a user can understand and feel at home with and which the computer being programmed can also understand or at least interpret.

Initially, the interface between user and machine was heavily biased towards the latter: communication with machines had to be performed by means of sequences of 0s and 1s. This language is gradually being redressed and today we instruct machines using high-level languages, such as Basic and Pascal, which are more easily understood by human users. These languages are used to tell machines how to perform tasks. This is not easy, especially when the machine itself consists of many independent processors physically dispersed and communicating over networks. Moreover, the customer who buys a new computer system does not really

know the internal details of how it works but is very concerned with what it can do for him. It can often be very difficult to formulate descriptions of this "external behaviour" of computer systems. Such descriptions are called "specifications" and the languages used to "specify" computer systems are called "specification languages". Specifications play a central role in modern software development. For example, they make it easier for a team of designers, possibly including potential customers or users, to discuss projected computer systems. The task of the design team will then include ensuring that the system which is eventually constructed satisfies the specification originally agreed upon.

Professor Hoare's book, in which he charts his recent research in this area, presents a notation or language for describing distributed or concurrent systems and their specifications. Central to his approach is the idea of a process: a conceptual agent which communicates via channels with similar agents. One language (or rather series of languages) developed in the book describes these processes. Essentially, it consists of combinators, various methods of combining existing processes to form new ones. Processes are governed by laws, which are in turn expressed by equational identities. For example, if "concurrent with" is a combinator, an obvious identity would be $x \text{ concurrent with } y = y \text{ concurrent with } x$. The laws may also be viewed as valid transformations. An easily understood description of a process, which is perhaps too inefficient to implement directly, can be manipulated using the laws into a possibly more opaque description which would then form the basis of an efficient implementation. Although much of the world is informed by universal algebra, Hoare does not emphasize the connection. The implicit assumption underlying his approach, common in mathematics, is

that one understands an object not by discovering its essence but by understanding its structure. Together with this process language, Hoare develops a specification language for describing properties of processes. A typical property would be "if process X receives (the message) five pence from the (channel) slot, it sends (the message consisting of) a biscuit to the (channel) slot", or more informally "X is a vending machine". The description of the process and specification languages is accompanied by the development of a logic for proving statements of the form $P \text{ satisfies } S$. process P satisfies the specification S or P has the property S. This is essentially a form of second-order logic.

The book is well designed, apart from the almost complete lack of references and bibliography, which gives the unfortunate impression that Hoare and his co-workers are alone in this research area. But in fact his work is a variation on a well established theme, that of algebraic semantics of processes, which in turn is simply one of many related approaches to the problems Hoare addresses.

Hoare obviously enjoys his work: his enthusiasm shines through in every page, and his expository style is excellent. The book is full of fascinating examples taken from a wide range of possible applications; indeed, these are the most satisfactory part of the book and show that his approach has considerable potential. Other aspects, however, tend to suggest that Hoare's enthusiasm has at times outstripped his ability to organize his intuitive insights. The mathematical basis for his approach is treated very sketchily, and as we proceed through the book the links between the languages and the underlying model and proof systems become more and more tenuous. Many laws are propounded but are rarely used. All but the most trivial proofs are argued outside the proof systems, using intuitive reasoning.

Hoare's methodologies are designed to prove properties of his mathematical model rather than the behaviour of processes. Programmers, however, are interested only in this behaviour of processes, as implemented, for example, along the lines suggested in the book. They want to know what happens when they run those

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The College has major branches at The Cut, Watlington, SE1, Tanner Street, Barmsey Road, SE1, Asylum Road, East Peckham, SE16, and Blackfriars Road, SE1, and smaller branches at other locations.

Applicants should be well qualified academically and possess a sound knowledge of further education, together with administrative experience at a senior level.

Under the provisions of the Burnham (Further Education) Report, the College is in Group 7 and the salary for the post of Principal is £24,808 per annum plus a £1038 London Allowance (subject to review).

Further information and application forms (to be returned by 13 December 1985) may be obtained from the Education Officer (EC/FHE 4), Inner London Education Authority, Room 257A, The County Hall, London SE7PB or by telephone, by ringing 01-633 7988.

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Closing Date: 31st December 1986.

Further details and application forms are obtainable from the County Education Officer, PO Box 47, Threadneedle House, Market Road, Chelmsford, Essex. Tel: 0245 267222, Ext. 2880. (0708)

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Further details and an application form are available from:

The Principal
West Glamorgan Institute of Higher Education
Towynall Road
Swansea
SA2 0UT

Tel: (0792) 203482

Closing Date 13th December, 1985



**Trinity College, Carmarthen
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Applications are invited for the post of

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Applicants should be bilingual, possess a good honours degree and have recent and substantial teaching experience.

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The Principal, Trinity College,
Carmarthen, Dyfed SA31 3EP.

(70760)



**the College
of Ripon and York
St John**

Applications are invited for the following post in this Church of England Voluntary College of Higher Education (1800 men and women). The appointment will be at an appropriate point on the Head of Department Scale Grade IV (£16,540-£17,400). The appointment will date from 1st April 1986.

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Further details and application forms may be obtained from The Principal, College of Ripon and York St John, Lord Mayors' Walk, York YO3 7EX, to whom completed forms should be returned to arrive not later than MONDAY 16th December 1985.

74657



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Further details and application form, from:

The Staffing Officer, Dorset Institute of Higher Education,
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Tel: 0202 524111 Ext 208.

(70762)



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Further details and application form available from The Senior Registrar, The North East Wales Institute, Connaah's Quay, Deeside, Clwyd, Tel: Deeside 817531, Extn. 254.

Closing date for receipt of applications 6th December 1985.

(70764)

Administration



The Council for National Academic Awards

Assistant Registrar Arts and Humanities

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Applications are invited for Assistant Registrar post in Division II, to cover responsibilities for the validation of courses and related activities in Arts & Humanities.

In addition to work in the above field the Assistant Registrar will be involved in the development of the Council's academic policy generally.

The post is available from 1st February, 1986 or as soon as possible, for a fixed period of three years. However the Council would also welcome applicants seconded by employers for a substantial part or all of that period.

Candidates for the above post should be well qualified academically and/or professionally. Appropriate teaching and/or administrative experience in the field of Higher Education would be helpful.

For further details, please contact:

The Personnel and Training Officer

The Council for National Academic Awards,

344-354 Crays Inn Road

London WC1X 8BP

Closing date for return of applications: 13 December 1985.

(70762)

Educational Counselling and Credit Transfer Information Service (ECCTIS)

Information Officer

The Department of Education and Science has extended the contract awarded to the Open University for the development of ECCTIS until the end of 1986. ECCTIS has been set up as a national computerised service to provide information about courses in further and higher education.

We are now seeking to strengthen the staff by appointing an additional Information Officer. The person appointed will be responsible for the development and maintenance of the database of course information. This will include contact with external agencies who are helping ECCTIS expand the database and with educational institutions providing the courses covered by the service.

Applications are invited from graduates and/or persons with relevant experience. Good communication skills are required along with a detailed knowledge of the higher and further education system in the United Kingdom.

The post, based at the Open University, is initially for a fixed term ending 31st December 1986. The appointment will be on US Grade 1A £7,620-£12,638 (pay award pending) with starting salary according to qualifications and experience.

For an application form and further particulars please contact Mrs. R. Mason, ECCTIS, (1903/2), P.O. Box 88, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 8DB.

Telephone Milton Keynes (0908) 368224

Closing date for applications: 16th December.

(70765)

The British Institute of International and Comparative Law

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

The successful applicant should have the necessary legal qualification, experience and interest to assume, working with the Director, responsibility for the Institute's programme of research, discussion and publication in one of the fields of its work in public international law, private international law, comparative law or European Community law. Opportunity will exist for the successful applicant to pursue his own research, part-time teaching and publication.

The salary dependent on age and experience will be £10,000 to £13,000 per annum. Starting date by negotiation.

Further information may be obtained from the Director, British Institute of International and Comparative Law, 17 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DR, to whom application with full curriculum vitae and the names of three referees should be made by 3rd January 1986.

(70767)

Administration continued

Department of Education and Science

HM Inspectors of Schools

Applications are invited from men and women, preferably aged between 35 and 45, for appointment in England as HM Inspectors. HMI inspect educational institutions as part of both general and specialist assignments and provide advice to the Department and throughout the education system.

Current vacancies are for specialists in:

(A) Primary Education

Ref. 18/86

Applicants should have relevant teaching experience and knowledge of current thinking and practice relating to the curriculum and to school organisation within the 5-13 age range. It will be advantageous to have held a post of substantial responsibility in primary education and to have significant expertise and knowledge of a particular subject or curricular area.

(B) Information Technology

Ref. 19/86

Applicants should have substantial teaching experience, and have worked with information technology in the context of the school curriculum. A background in primary schools or in computer-related disciplines in secondary schools or teaching training institutions would be advantageous. Those with experience of the development of curriculum materials, the training of teachers, school administration, or the use of computers in school administration will be welcomed.

Starting salary for all posts is within the range £17,000-£22,900. Relocation expenses of up to £5,000 may be payable.

Application forms (to be returned as soon as possible and not later than 13th December 1985) and further information may be obtained from Mrs S Willis, Department of Education and Science, 39 York Road, London, SE1 7PH. Telephone: 01-934 0798, 0799, 0800. The Civil Service is an equal opportunity employer.

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Research and Studentships continued

Modern Humanities Research Association

RESEARCH ASSOCIATESHIPS

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Applications are invited for research studentships in the School of Law to pursue research leading to an LL.M. The studentships will cover fees and carry a maintenance allowance corresponding to the current rate for D.E.S. and Research Council awards.

Further particulars together with forms of application can be obtained from the Senior Administrative Assistant, School of Law, University of East Anglia, Norwich, NR4 7TJ to whom applications should be submitted by not later than May 12th 1986.

(70764)

Four copies of applications should be made by directors of Projects to the Honorary Secretary, Modern Humanities Research Association, 100 Bedford Square, London WC1R 4EJ. Applications should be made by 1st January 1986.

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Research and Studentships continued

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(70741)

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Centre for Housing Research

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Applications are invited for the post of Research Assistant, responsible for the collection of data for a major study in housing research. The successful candidate will be expected to participate in the collection of data, and to assist in the analysis and interpretation of the results. The post is for a full-time position, and the successful candidate will be expected to work on a flexible basis, and to be available for a period of 12 months.

Salary on Range 1A (£7,820 to £11,148 per annum).

The post is based at the Glasgow Centre for Housing Research, 55 Southpark Avenue, Glasgow G12 8LE. Applications, containing a full curriculum vitae and the names and addresses of two referees, should be sent to the above address by 16th December 1985. (92294) H12

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Adult education in BRIXTON has been transformed since the riots of 1981. But is it the panacea for the inner city blues? Maggie Richards reports from "the front line" (page 12)

"If justice is to be done, a single system of validation should span the binary divide". Sir **NORMAN LINDOP** looks at validation by the Council for National Academic Awards (page 15)

Human interest: in the first part of a series on **ANTHROPOLOGY** Sir Edmund Leach looks at the subject's origins, its peculiar dilemmas and its adaptation to a world very different from that of the pioneers (pages 16 and 17)

ARTS: Kurt Schwitters at the Tate... Homage to Barcelona... Louise Page, proof of the university drama pudding? (page 18)

It was 1893 when the British military last fired on strikers. However, recent events—as far back as Grunwick and the 1972 miners' strike—suggest that a new confrontationist **POLICE** attitude is emerging from the post-war compact. P. A. J. Waddington reviews three new books on the policing of Britain (page 19)

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Dr Rickett's irregulars

Every year it is the same. Some members of the board of the National Advisory Body, rousing led by Dr Ray Rickett, the director of Middlesex Polytechnic, insist that the number of students in polytechnics and colleges must be frozen unless extra resources can be provided. They argue that the unit of resource, income per student, has already fallen dangerously low. Thus far but no further, is their message.

They are opposed by the NAB "establishment" — the committee, Mr Christopher Ball, chairman of the NAB board, non-institutional members of the board, and the NAB's officers. Not, of course, that this "establishment" does not recognise the force of the arguments put forward by the Rickett irregulars. They do. They are also alarmed by the possible erosion of standards in advanced further education as extra students are enrolled without matching resources. But their bottom line is maintaining access rather than protecting standards. So in the end they vote to admit the extra students, although they always solemnly warn the Department of Education and Science that it will be for the last time. Their message is, to adapt St Augustine, give me standards and a protected unit of resource — but not yet.

This year is no different from last year, or the year before. The NAB committee, after a convincing show of regret, has agreed that polytechnics and colleges should admit extra students despite a £15 million shortfall in the pool. Dr Rickett and his irregulars have argued that this decision is in conflict with established NAB policy, which is to protect the unit of resource.

At one level this perennial dispute is simply a reflection of that *recherché* soap-opera, the politics of the NAB. It is part of a wider struggle for legitimacy between those old rivals, the institutions and the local authorities: who is to be recognized as the authentic representative of non-university higher education? It also reflects an inevitable difference of emphasis. Institutional leaders responding to the preoccupations of their academic constituency naturally insist on the need to protect standards; local authority leaders responding to the pressures from their political constituencies equally naturally are more preoccupied by the need to maintain access.

At another level the dispute is about tactics. The NAB "establishment" believes that by admitting more students polytechnics and colleges will earn Brownie points with the DES. When ministers come to decide the distribution of resources between the two sectors of higher education, so the argument goes, the polytechnics and colleges will be able to cash in the points they have earned. They will have secured greater leverage — in a practical sense because in the end cash follows students and in political terms because they have helped the Govern-

ment off its sharp Morton's fork by allowing it to accommodate the present student peak without breaching its public expenditure iron curtain.

The leaders of the NAB have been much influenced by the counter-example of the universities, which struggled insensitively throughout the 1970s to maintain their unit of resource and so arguably provoked the cuts debacle of 1981. They are determined that the public sector should never lose the cost advantage it has over the universities. They also point out with weary resignation that many institutions will vote with their feet in any case and admit the extra students whatever the NAB says. In their view these twin determinations to be as cost-effective as possible and to maintain the highest degree of access are virtues of which any government will approve.

The Rickett irregulars see things very differently. They believe that the DES is much more likely to respect, and reward, the polytechnics and colleges if they refuse to devalue their standards by admitting too many students. In this HM inspectors are shadowy and ambivalent allies. They argue that now is the time to stand firm on funding when the DES is desperately anxious not to have too many disappointed candidates for higher education on its hands: in a few years the polytechnics' and colleges' bargaining strength may have been eroded by demographic decline. Every time extra students are admitted without matching resources the unit of resource is driven down — never to rise again. Finally they object to their institutions being used as a concertina sector, to be expanded on demand to accommodate the 1980s student peak (and contracted at will to match any trough in the 1990s).

The debate cannot be resolved within the context of either the bickering politics of the NAB or the choice of the most effective tactics to squeeze extra money from the present Government. This apparently arid argument about the unit of resource, perhaps an incomprehensible term to many people in higher education, has to be set within the principled context of that much larger debate about the future of the public sector. In particular the polytechnics. Are the latter increasingly to be regarded as broadly analogous to the universities, more open, more vocational, more diverse perhaps but recognizably in the same business? Some signals from the NAB, like its new research fund, point in that direction. Or are the polytechnics to be seen as fulfilling a quite different role, complementary or competitive depending on one's taste of the future? Other NAB signals, most notably although perhaps involuntarily its progressive erosion of the unit of resource, point in this opposite direction.

The difficulty is that the comparison with the universities provides an inescapable reference point; why do we

allow them to spend more money than polytechnics on apparently identical tasks? But it also a treacherous reference point for two reasons. First, why should the public sector be ruled by external and arguably alien norms? Surely polytechnics and colleges should be encouraged to strike their own independent balance between the competing claims of quality and access in harmony with their own purposes.

Second, the pattern and funding of universities are likely to change radically as a result of the apparently endless erosion of their grant and of the University Grants Committee's efforts to rationalize that decline. So they provide a far from fixed reference point. If a stratified university league does painfully emerge, are the polytechnics content simply to be slotted into some lower division? Surely they are worth more than that, in terms both of the educational objectives they represent and of the resources they have an eventual right to claim.

So the debate about the unit of resource gets more rather than less complicated the more its elements are carefully unpicked. After all quality and access cannot be regarded as mutually exclusive goals; they interpenetrate each other at so many levels. Nor do these terms suggest clearly defined programmes. Take quality. Of course the public sector is under resourced but it is probably part-time students who suffer most. Yet the immediate effect of restricting the number of available places would be to raise the A level scores of full-time students. So a justifiable concern about the quality of provision would be translated into a more arguable policy of raising the quality of students, a very different thing. Or take access. The NAB's credible determination to maintain access by ensuring that qualified school leavers are not turned away may have the unfortunate effect of pushing polytechnics and colleges even further into becoming full-time degree factories to the detriment of part-time and non-degree courses and continuing education.

So should the NAB committee have agreed to take the extra students or not? The safest answer perhaps is that while it was right to continue to underline the principle of access it should have begun to take a stand — an actual cut may have been out of the question, but a freeze? A clearer signal should have been sent to the Government that enough is (almost) enough, that any further decline in resourcing standards in polytechnics and colleges will lead to an irreversible decline in the quality of the public sector. Its credibility as a provider of high-quality higher education is now on the line. As for the Rickett irregulars they should perhaps put less faith, and force, in their invidious comparisons with universities and devote more time to defining the particular contours of quality in the polytechnics.

The Unesco waiting game

The closer the Government comes to making a decision on Britain's membership of Unesco, the less the argument seems to be about the reforms demanded at the beginning of the year. The goalposts were moved to some extent before the general conference in Sofia and now international and domestic lobbying has practically obscured the original issues.

British demands were laid out with admirable clarity by Mr Timothy Raison, Minister for Overseas Development, in April 1984. Even the Unesco bureaucracy and its defenders among the other member governments had to admit that the British approach was a constructive one.

Since then, some of Unesco's greatest critics concede that member states have been bonding over backwards to move in the direction demanded. Special committees were established with Mr Raison's letter effectively representing their agenda, reforms were debated in the executive board and a consensus reached which

included British agreement. By the time the show had moved on to Sofia new British demands had been formulated and officials' optimism expressed publicly over the summer gave way to a new hard line from Mr Raison. The suspicion grew that reasons were being sought for carrying out the threat to leave, rather than trying to make sufficient progress to justify staying in.

Now the United States government has begun to apply new pressure for a British withdrawal and subtle moves have begun at home to try to buy off the aid lobby. Mr Raison has taken the unusual step of suggesting in a radio interview that the £5 million saved by leaving Unesco could be channelled into the British Council's programmes.

After eight successive years of cuts in the council's budget, such concern is surprising and tempting, but should be firmly rejected. The British Council is a venerable institution, which undoubtedly is more efficient than Un-

esco but robbing Peter to pay Paul is no solution.

The decision on membership of Unesco is awaited anxiously throughout the third world, not just in the organization's Paris headquarters. And there is no doubting the wishes of those nations the Government claims would be better served through bilateral aid. In an assessment of the organization which was as free from international political pressures as Mr Raison claimed in Sofia, their views would surely be more important than those of a government which has already made the break without waiting to see what could be achieved on the inside.

In fact, of course, it has been a political question from the start. Unesco probably never has been any better or any worse than other United Nations agencies in terms of its efficiency or political bias. And the progress made in the last 18 months should at least warrant a stay of execution, as the full impact of the cuts is felt.

Laurie Taylor



Heads of department at City University are being urged to sit in on lecturers' seminars, see if their teaching is up to the mark. THES, November 15, 1984

Yes, do sit down, Doctor Lane. Thank you, sir.

First, let me say that I was whole relatively pleased with I saw yesterday of your teaching performance in Seminar 2A. Thank you, sir.

It can't be the easiest thing in the world to interest a group of year accountants in the Tenets of World Philosophy, particularly when you're restricted to the single term.

One does one's best, sir. Quite so. Now let me touch on small points. Tackling them in a logical order. First, the quality of the register.

I did take it.

Yes indeed. But was it, I was necessary to do so when there only five students registered for seminar and there were three present. Surely one could do count. Unless, that is, one was the presence of infiltrators. No, sir. I just thought.

Which leads me nicely on to question of names. It's always teaching practice to know student names, particularly by the end of the week of term. But you only one name in the course of the seminar and that was "Diane" which I believe you erroneously applied to an American overseas student called "Diane".

I was thinking of... Neither did I feel that your remark struck quite the deep business-like tone one wants at beginning of a new session. It was it now? Ah yes. "Where we up to last week?"

I only... But I did feel that the discussion Greek philosophy was moderately successful, although I wonder why you felt obliged to write name Plato on the board at stage of the term.

It was force of... And I may have been wrong but thought I detected some momentum in the group when you then the austerity of the Stoical attitude to that favoured by Socrates.

Cripps. I couldn't think of a more... Nor were matters greatly helped by the slightly lax discipline which prevailed.

Everyone seemed to be uneasy. Everyone who was present, I think. Lazenby. But unfortunately I did not appear to notice that members of the group had minutes before the end. Really? I was a bit wrapped up in...

Overall then, I'm afraid that do fall slightly below the required university standard, and in your head of department I must impose the usual sanction. Will it be? Hands or backside. Backside, please sir. Spoken like a man, Lazenby.

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